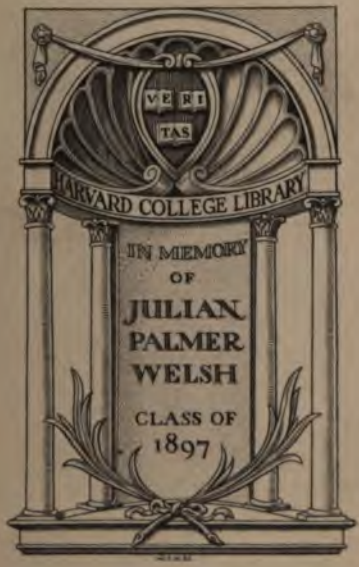
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VILLAGE SKETCHES,

OR

TALES OF SOMERVILLE.

"Here form in fancy's retrospective view,
A sketch of what has been———"

NORRISTOWN, PA.
PRINTED BY DAVID SOWER, Jr.
1825.

DEDICATION.

To Mr. WILLIAM B. TAPPAN,

Author of "*Songs of Judah*"—"*New-England,*" *and other Poems, &c. &c.*

DEAR SIR,

The only apology I shall offer for prefixing your name to this work, is the sincere affection of one who admires your virtues equally with your literary talents, and is happy to number you among his dearest friends.

THE AUTHOR.

Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

SEAL. BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the fifteenth day of February in the forty ninth year of the Independence of the United States of America A. D. 1825. DAVID SOWER, JR. of said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book the right whereof he claims as proprietor in the words following to wit:

VILLAGE SKETCHES, OR TALES OF SOMERVILLE,

"Here form in fancy's retrospective view,
A sketch of what has been———"

In conformity to the Act of Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts and Books, to authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."—And also to the Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the Arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PREFACE.

The following Tales are what they profess to be —mere *Sketches;*—the scenes laid in a country village. The reader who looks for any thing more than an humble attempt to describe incidents of an ordinary nature, will turn from these pages in disappointment. The Tales are such perhaps as have been a thousand times told. But while the author is aware there are many works of this kind of far superior merit, he believes these Sketches will be read by some, who might not meet with those that are better written. The mere novelty of a new publication often elicits the attention of readers, in preference to standard works of established reputation. There is always a general desire for *something new;* and when an attempt to gratify this desire does not interfere with *more important* reading, it may not perhaps require an apology, however humble,—provided, it does not violate the rules of virtue and religion. It is presumed, these pages will not produce that effect. It has been the wish of the author, as far as he was able, to inculcate some useful precepts in the course of these Sketches,—probably the chief recommendation in favour of light or fictitious reading.....He does not offer this however, as an apology for its errors. It is indeed a weak subterfuge of some authors, who imagine their works

should be favoured, however imperfect, merely because they express some brief moral which could be better told in half a dozen words.

One or two of these Sketches have been published, and their reception was more favourable than the author expected—He submits them now, with much diffidence, to the indulgence of the public. Should any consider them worthy of criticism, he will cheerfully submit, if their strictures should be conducted with a candid and liberal spirit.

Philadelphia—1825.

SKETCH, I.

SOMERVILLE.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flowery bosom to the noon-day beam,
Where many a rose bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty team.
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long, long groves eternal murmur made;
And toward the Western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, through the cliffs, the eye remote survey'd
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold array'd.

THE MINSTREL.

On the banks of a little stream that takes its source among one of the minor ridges of the Allegheny, and empties into the Susquehanna, in the western parts of Pennsylvania, stands the little town of Somerville. It is one of those sweetly sequestered spots which nature seems to have marked for the quiet retirement of those who wish to mingle but little with the world. Situated, at the foot of a high sloping hill, and surrounded by solitary woodlands, it seems at a little distance, to be literally buried in the wildness of uncultivated nature. But, on a nearer approach, the eye is delighted with the visible hand of culti-

vation. The beautiful simplicity of the dwelling houses—the neat little stone Church, whose spire rises above the trees a short distance off—the old school house, from whose windows the little children may be seen peeping their heads at the passing stranger,—and the cultivated little gardens attached to each house—all bespeak a taste and refinement which many would not expect to find in a village so very remote from the busy world.

The number of tomb stones for so small a settlement in the little Church yard, may give some idea of the age of the place. It is older than many a village that has long since surpassed it in size. It is one of those country settlements which with all their beauty and fairy simplicity, are not calculated to flourish much in size and extent.

Somerville was first settled immediately after the Revolution, by a good old man, named Mr. So- [illegible] had resided in Philadelphia a long time [illegible], but, meeting with a sudden reverse of fortune, he retired with his family to enjoy that domestic quiet and happiness which he could not find in a city life.

The spot was a rude wilderness when Mr. Somers first settled upon it;—but, with a little assistance, a few comfortable log houses were soon erected, which conveniently sheltered his own family, consisting of a wife and seven children, and those who had accompanied him. As he grew old he found his little settlement gradually increasing in the number of buildings, and it was not very long before the inhabitants concluded to dignify it with a name. They accordingly called it So-

merville, after its first settler. As all of Mr. Somers' children married in the course of a few years, his own family and their descendents formed no inconsiderable part of the village.

Mr. Somers was a pious man. Every sabbath, while but two or three low cottages formed the settlement, the little congregation was gathered together in his own house, where he would perform a regular divine service. There was no difference of party or creed amongst them. Their devotion united in one christian feeling. He always addressed them in a plain, lucid and forcible style, and on scripture subjects: the unadorned language of the heart is always calculated to make the most impression. His affable conciliating manners in private gained him the esteem of all around him. As the village grew, a small stone Church was erected a short distance off and Mr. Somers acted as its regular pastor—a kinder one could not have been selected any where. He loved his little flock as if they were his own children, and they looked up to him as to a benevolent and affectionate parent.

The affairs of the village were regulated by a kind of Legislative council, consisting of nine, which the inhabitants chose annually, with Mr. Somers as their President—and thus Somerville presented a little republic—governed almost independently by its own laws. All principal disputes or differences were adjusted by this tribunal, and the decision was always acquiesced in without further trouble.

Little need be said of the beauties of the scenery surrounding Somerville. All who know any thing of our Western country, particularly in many parts of Pennsylvania, are too well acquainted with its richness and grandeur, to require my feeble description. Suffice it to say that the scene of these tales is beautifully romantic and one on which the Poet and the Painter might dwell, with the fondness of enthusiasm.

SKETCH, 2.

THE MARRIAGE.

"Oh!" lives there, Heaven! beneath thy dread expanse,
One hopeless—dark idolator of CHANCE?"

CAMPBELL.

We often have reason to wonder, and with feelings of gratitude, at the mysterious ways of Providence; or, as some miscall them, the workings of *chance*. We see the goodness and wisdom of God displayed in his minutest works; and when we contemplate the beautiful harmony and effect of the whole course of nature, we cannot but admit that every mysterious operation, or strange coincidence must be the work of the same wise hand. Providence works by secondary means to accomplish original aims; and we see it strikingly exemplified in the dispositions and actions of the human family. Although we cannot often penetrate the object, or motive, of many strange events, yet we are obliged to admit that "chance is direction which we cannot see."

In the early settlement of Somerville, while it was yet almost a wilderness, its peaceful inhabitants were frequently alarmed by the intrusions of scattering parties of hostile Indians; who not only ravaged and spread destruction among the lonely cottages that bordered on the frontier, but extended their depredations into villages, and even the suburbs of large towns. It was on a beautiful summer afternoon just before the sun had withdrawn its last mellow tints from the herbaged summit of Laurel Hill,—that two children of Mr. Hortons—(one a darling boy about four years old, named Edward—the other, his sister Julia, two years old,) were playing on the green plat before the house when a small scouting party of Indians passed through the village—picked up the boy and fled precipitately into the woods. His frightened little sister ran into the house alone crying out in such a manner as to make the Father suspect the cause. He hastened to the door, but his child was gone—at the same instant a woman came running up to him, out of breath, to declare the melancholy tidings. An alarm was raised, and nearly every inhabitant of the village joined in pursuit. But the Indians, swift as the deer of their native forest, were far out of sight, and the villagers one by one returned without meeting with the least success. Nothing could console the unhappy parents. They were blessed with but two children; and upon these they doated with perhaps more than a proper affection: they were the idols of their hearts. Their attention, after weeks of fruitless search for

the lost child, was directed particularly to the education of their daughter Julia, who now seemed doubly dear to them.

Julia Horton grew up under the fostering care of the most indulgent parents, until it pleased Providence to make her a lonely orphan at the tender age of fifteen. Her father died first, and this stroke of affliction increased an illness under which her mother had for sometime laboured, and she fell a victim to it, a few months after. But Julia was not without guardians after the death of her parents. She had always been a great favourite among the inhabitants, and many of them kindly invited her to make one in their families. She however accepted the invitation of her uncle, *(Mr. Freeman,)* who had an adopted daughter in his family long an intimate friend of Julia's.

Mary Freeman and Julia Horton were the flowers of the village. Of every little party they were sure to be made the conspicuous guests; indeed the circle never appeared complete without them. Julia passed for a remarkable beauty, and was equally admired for her modest and unassuming manners. She had an eye expressive of the pure innocence of her heart. Her whole countenance wore a calm sedate appearance, which indicated a mind much given to serious reflection—a shade of melancholy was sometimes diffused over her open features, probably from the recollection of her early trials, which seem to dampen that lightness and vivacity which generally accompany a person of her years. She spoke seldom, but was free from

reserve. Her silence was either owing to an admirable habit of caution in speaking, or to that modesty, fearful of offence, for which a female is so universally admired.

Mary was rather younger than Julia, and more gay and volatile in her dress and manners; her features, tho' not very handsome, were expressive of the amiable feelings of her heart.

Conspicuous, as these young friends were, it might be expected they would not fail to attract the attentions and gallantries of the other sex, of whom Somerville could boast a good proportion. The interesting contrast of character in the young ladies, rendered them generally the favourites of different tastes. For hilarity and cheerfulness, the society of Mary would be prefered—but Julia was generally sought by those who were more fond of sedate or serious conversation.

After they had lived together a few years, they became acquainted with a young man, recently a stanger in the village by the name of *Vancroft*. During his short residence in the place, they had heard much in favour of his personal merits, and had indulged a strong desire to know him. The females of Somerville could not boast of a *beau* whose manners and appearance were more prepossessing—he had an eye of quick intelligence—a face much sunburnt, and a countenance that might be called handsome and manly. His understanding was naturally strong, and plainly evinced that it only wanted a little cultivation to make it shine eminently among men. His chief merit however

consisted in his piety and goodness of heart. He was not only exemplary in his moral character, but was adorned apparently with nearly every christian virtue. In his manners and conversation he was affable and sprightly. He possessed none of that monkish gloom, often exhibited by those who falsely imagine, religion will not admit of a cheerful, or smiling countenance, but his whole conduct was marked by good sense and an amiable frankness.

Such qualifications were well calculated to make an impression on the hearts of Mary and Julia, particularly on that of the latter.

The visits of Mr. Vancroft soon became frequent, and were evidently paid with a more serious intention than as a *friend*. The retiring manners of Julia did not attract so much attention at first, as the more open and social behaviour of Mary. But a further acquaintance discovered a train of qualities in the former which seemed rather more congenial with his mind; and it was not long before he evinced towards her some evidence of partiality. This prefference however never blinded him to the worth of Mary, or led him to treat her with indifference in Julia's presence. So far was this from the case, that he sometimes even doubted with himself which of the females he really esteemed most.

"Julia I would wager ten to one, Mr. Vancroft's in love," said Mary, as they were once taking their usual walk in the twilight of a beautiful evening.

"It may be so indeed," replied Julia, "and perhaps no one could lay a wager with more safety than my friend Mary."

"Why so, cousin?"

"They say," returned Julia, "there is generally an answering feeling in the heart of one that's loved."

"That might be too," said Mary, "and yet this feeling, as you call it, may be as far from my heart, as that heart is from the thoughts of Mr. Vancroft.—But, Julia, what paper were you reading this morning so attentively? some tender love-epistle I imagine—in Mr. Vancroft's delicate hand! I may see the direction, I suppose?"——

"Yes, Mary—and the contents too, if you wish, it was nothing but———"

"A few lines with—'*my dearest Julia*'—at the head"—interrupted Mary:—"yet I ought not to be so inquisitive, but indeed, coz. I am so fond of seeing love-letters"———

"Receiving them, you should rather say"—replied Julia, "I know, my dear Mary is no novice in such tender subjects, and I can therefore readily excuse her curiosity——but this contains merely a few verses that——some lines that——were handed me last evening.

"*Handed* to you, were they!"—returned Mary, with a sly, artful smile, while she received the paper and glanced over the contents—"very prettily written indeed—signed '*V.*' too,—a letter in the alphabet, to which I doubt not, cousin, you are a little partial.

"I fear I ought not to have given it to you"—said Julia, feeling that it gained nothing from the playful irony of her friend—"return it to me, dear, he would not like it."

"Not like it!—he is no poet then, my word for it," replied Mary—"It is as natural, Julia, for a poet to be born with vanity as with genius. They would not live a month, as poets, without the worlds applause. But I must read a *few* lines."

Julia withdrew her hand, and Mary read as follows:

Morn's orient tears may disappear,
The rose may blight in the evening shade,
Nights twinkling gems be no longer clear,
And beauty's blossoms begin to fade,——
But while billows roll on the breast of the sea,
I shall never, dear girl, cease thinking of thee.

"You must read no more," said Julia, snatching the paper from her hand, I would not for the would he should know it."

"A timely caution, Julia," said Mary, casting her eyes across the field—"for here comes the poet himself."

Mr. Vancroft was at that instant passing along the road near them, and on seeing them he passed over to where they were.

"Quite in time, Mr. Vancroft"—said Mary, we were just speaking of you."

"A very melancholy theme, I imagine," he replied as he cast his eyes upon the blushing countenance of Julia.

"Oh no!—it was in part literary, and you know that is a favourite subject with my cousin here."

Julia made a sign for Mary to be silent, as she changed the subject by alluding to the beautiful azure tint which the distance threw over the foliage of Laurel Hill, then rising majestically before them. "This scene reminds me, cousin Mary," said she, "of the elegant lines of Campbell, which we were perusing this morning:—

"At summer's eve, when Heavens ærial bow
Spans with bright arch the glittering hills below,—
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,
Whose sun-bright summit mingles with the sky?
Why do those cliffs of shadowy tints appear
More sweet than all the landscape smilings near?
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,
And robes the mountain in its azure hue."

"Nature, continued Julia, makes many interesting changes at this season of the year."

"Yes Julia,"—replied Vancroft, with a good humoured smile, as he took one of each of their arms in his own—"the changes of the seasons are quite as pretty, as those of mankind are ingenious."

Julia was conscious of the allusion which Vancroft meant to the abrupt manner in which she had changed the subject of their discourse, but she continued without any other notice of it than her blushes.—

"I was never very far from Somerville, said she, but it seems as if nature had consecrated the little spot and made it the choice depository of her varied beauties."

"The spot is not more hallowed by nature," replied Mr. Vancroft, "than by the blessed little community that inhabits it, and for her choicest gifts I might perhaps refer to my two friends here—Miss Freeman and"———

"Nay, Mr. Vancroft"—interrupted Julia—"whether you would jest or flatter, you know it can do no good."

"You must be cautious, sir,"—said Mary, smiling—"cousin Julia does not fancy these very fine words."

"Well my Julia, thou art right"—returned Vancroft—"and I apologise for my fault. Flattery is a gilded poison which too often ruins the minds of our most amiable females. Such is the vanity of human nature, that there are few who do not court it, even in its grossest extreme. While we warn *your* sex against its very seductive influence, we can hardly find language severe enough to condemn the general practice of it among *our own.*"

By this time they had arrived at the house, when Vancroft, mentioning an engagement he had to fulfil, left them.

Six months had not elapsed before Julia Horton and Mr. Vancroft were engaged to be married. The nuptial day was fixed, and each looked forward to it as the consummation of their earthly happiness. Nor were the people of the village indifferent to the coming event. In so small a circle of inhabitants, weddings did not often occur; when they did, they were made general hollidays

throughout the village; and young and old wou. participate in the festivities of the occasion—the young pair were seldom from each other's presence in those hours usually devoted to visiting. On the sabbath they were seen going to church together, and they always sat in the same pew—the smiling countenances of the villagers bespoke a blessing on them as they passed; and even the little school boy felt joyous on seeing them, for he knew on their marriage day, there would be no school.

About two weeks before the event was to take place, Vancroft was slightly taken ill, which continued however, but a few days. On his recovery he hastened to visit his intended bride, whom he found alone, and in serious meditation. As he entered the room, she arose and with an affectionate look—took his hand, and said——

"Mr. Vancroft, you know not how happy I am, to see you out; I have been thinking of your illness ever since I heard of it.

"Indeed, my Julia," said he, "I thank thee for this kind sympathy—but I would not give thee unnecessary pain. What think you, Julia,—my physician tells me I must take a few miles ride on horseback, for exercise:—will not Julia, take a seat with me, to hold me on?—these weak limbs would hardly bear me here—think the Doctor has not mistaken my strength?

"You should by all means, take moderate exercise"—replied Julia—"the Doctor would not

certainly wish you to go beyond your strength. I hope, my dear friend, you will take care of yourself."

"That I will, my Julia, if it is only to take care of thee. But as for these Esculapian gentry—there is no trusting them, very far; yet my Physician seems to be a good sort of a man."

"Indeed he is," said Julia, looking Mr. Vancroft tenderly in the face, "and your health could not have a better guardian—Dr. Penrose was always a favourite in our family. My dear Mother always spoke of him, as one of the kindest, and most skillful of men. Often did she relate the dangerous operation, he performed on the arm, and hand of my dear little brother."

"Have you a brother?" asked Vancroft.

"I had a brother," she replied, "but, poor little fellow, he was taken away, and killed. I do not recollect him, for I was very young. Oh!—Mr. Vancroft, that he were living now! all my near relatives are gone, and I am left alone."

Julia leaned her head upon her lover's breast, and wept. "Death does not stay his arm to ask what are the ties that link his victims to this world;—but" continued Vancroft—"what was the operation you spoke of, and how was he killed?"

"Dr. Penrose amputated two of his fingers and made a deep incision on his arm," replied Julia.

"Indeed," cried Vancroft—pulling off a glove from his left hand which had but three fingers on

it—"we have shared then a similar fate, I [illegible] those two members amongst my friends—the [illegible] *men.*"

"With whom?" said Julia.

"The Indians!"

"But how?" said she as she took his hand in her own.

"Oh"—said he—"it was in a deer hunt, I suppose. I have not much recollection of it."

"A deer hunt!—with the Indians!" cried Julia, eagerly——"but when?——were you ever among the Indians?"

"Yes Julia, I was *dear* hunting when I found thee"—replied Vancroft, patting her on her cheeks—"come Julia, let us walk into the garden, and enjoy the fresh air."

Julia assented, and the subject of their conversation was broke off as they entered the garden.

"It is charming weather," said Vancroft, "and I think my Julia it would be a favourable time to take an evening ride together; shall I procure a gig?"

"You recollect Mr. Vancroft, the Doctors' advice was that you should take your exercise on horseback. He is a good old man, and you should not neglect his instructions.

"No, but he is only a physician of the *body*," returned he, playfully—"while my fair Julia administers to the *mind*, and I need not illustrate the great superiority of the latter by a metaphysical discussion of the relation one has to the other. But Julia what is *thy* advice?"

"My advice is, to follow the advice of one that knows better."

"Brief indeed"—said Vancroft—"but I fear Julia does not wish my company."

"Not so, Mr. Vancroft, it is to enjoy your company in future, that I would part with you now. You are weak and need exercise—a short ride on your favourite poney would make an important change with you."

"It may indeed Julia," said Vancroft, as he pressed her hand affectionately to take his leave, —"few possess so kind a heart as thyself. I doubt not, my dear girl, I shall be myself again —Farewell!"

Julia wiped a tear from her eyes as she gave her hand, in silence, to her friend—and returned to her room. Her reflections were of the most serious nature; and why she could scarcely tell herself. She thought upon the happy day which was fast approaching to unite her fate with Vancraft's forever—and often did she beguile the lingering hours during his absence with such hopeful anticipations....She was soon however interrupted in her reflections by the voice of her friend Mary, announcing that supper was waiting. On entering the room, she found her uncle and aunt seated, who with Mary and herself, were all that composed the company at the table. As usual the approaching nuptial ceremony was introduced in the conversation, and the virtues of Mr. Vancroft extolled by all at the table, except Julia, who remained remarkably serious and still.

"Come Julia,"—said Mr. Freeman,—"this silence does not befit the approaching occasion.—Mr. Vancroft, I dare say, would rather see a smile on those pretty lips, were he here;—are you not well, my dear?"——

Julia made no reply.

"Come, coz." said Mary, with her accustomed cheerfulness;—Mr. Vancroft will return again this evening. He told me at the gate, he intended taking but a short ride."

Julia burst into tears.

"She is not well," cried her aunt, "Mary, lead her to the couch."

"No, no—Mary"—said Julia, partly recovering herself, "I was only thinking of my dear little brother."

The conversation here ended, and the company soon after arose from the table.

The sun was hardly set, before Dr. Penrose was called upon in haste to attend a stranger who had fallen from his horse, a short distance from the village.—The aged Doctor always punctual, at the call of affliction, left home immediately. In a few minutes he arrived at the place, and on entering the house, he found that the injured person, was no other than his patient, Mr. Vancroft. On examination the only injury he appeared to have sustained, was a few bruises, and the bone of his left arm dislocated at the elbow. On looking attentively at the arm, the Doctor stood several moments in silent astonishment.

"Good Doctor," said Vancroft, "be not alarmed—it is not much hurt—my horse took fright and——"

"My dear young friend—who do I see"—interrupted the Doctor—"do my eyes deceive me—or are you the long lost *Edward Horton!*—Yes!—you are, indeed—this is the very hand from which I amputated the two fingers—and this the scar on the arm from my own lancet."

"What's the matter, Doctor Penrose? enquired Vancroft, with astonishment.

"Much—indeed, Mr. Vancroft," replied the Doctor.—"But you are no longer Mr. Vancroft—you are the true, and long lost child, of my late friend—Mr. Horton!—and you have a sister—yes! the lovely Julia Horton, your intended bride, is no other, than your own dear sister!"

Vancroft was rather inclined to think his physician in a state of mental derangement, and gave but little credit to his words, until the Doctor, recovering from his sudden impulse of feeling, related the history of the family of the Hortons, and the manner in which Edward, when a child was taken. This corresponded so exactly with Vancroft's life, as far as he could recollect, that it at once dissipated every doubt; and it was not until then, that he was overcome by the force of his feelings.

The intelligence had a much deeper, and nearly a fatal effect upon the mind of Julia. Although she had once or twice, ventured such an idea in her mind, yet the fact, when devulged, was too much for her tender feelings to bear. I shall let

the reader imagine the state of her feelings, under circumstances so extraordinary, rather than attempt to describe them.

Mr. Vancroft,—or, as we must now call him, Edward Horton,—was not yet well enough to visit his sister in person; and prudence dictated that a sudden interview might be injurious to her;—he therefore immediately addressed her the following note.——

My Dear Sister,

Heaven has kindly averted the unnatural connection, and unfolded another not less dear and acceptable to each of us. Long a lonely wanderer in the world, with scarcely a friend but my God—unpitied—unthought of—no kind parent to watch over me—no sister to sooth my hours of sickness—it is not strange, that I should have considered myself happy in the social circles of Somerville; but when in one of those circles, I find a dear—*an own dear sister*, my heart is ready to burst with gratitude towards the great and kind *Being*, who has so wonderfully brought it to pass. How strange, and yet how sweet it is to call thee *sister!* a name of which I often felt the loss—but never knew the use. Truly indeed, my dear Julia—my sister—truly indeed have thy words been realised—*a ride has in reality made an important change within.* I repeat it, I rejoice in it—but my feelings will not permit me to add more—adieu my dear Julia till we meet:—

Your long lost brother—
EDWARD HORTON.

The interview took place. It need not be said it was an affecting one. A satisfactory understanding passed between them, the circumstance, as might be expected excited the wonder and curiosity of the whole village.—In a few months Edward Horton offered his hand to Mary Freeman, and they were married—Julia resided with the happy couple, and there was not a more interesting and attractive family in the whole village.

SKETCH, 3.

CHILDHOOD.

"Go—— dream of by-past hours,
In retrospect once more."

TAPPAN.

How fondly do we revert to the days of our early youth! How sweet it is to recall the little sports and convivalities that beguiled the unreflecting moments of those times. In revisiting the scenes of childhood, we read many a tale in the simple marks and initials we used to carve on some aged tree, under whose spreading foliage we had passed so many delightful hours. We there discover traces of the hands of many of our school mates, long since departed and gone. Such marks seem like sacred inscriptions on the tombs of those we loved. They forcibly remind us of early companions that have been separated by various circumstances, or severed from us by death, doomed like the wild flowers of the field, to perish in a little season. The bosom in such a contemplation, is warmed with a glow of feeling to which few other

subjects give birth. The reflection, it is true may sometimes be embittered in recalling scenes of danger—of folly, or of misfortune, from which few in boyhoods years are exempt; but the cares of youth are never so serious and oppressive as those of maturer age, and if they are the more frequent, they have the more effective remedies, and only tend to sweeten the joys and hopeful prospects that alternately play around them. The troubles of youth are easily mitigated by the soft and soothing attentions of a mother, or a sister.

One pleasant summer afternoon, I took a ramble over the fields where I had spent so many happy hours in my early youth. A fine breeze from the North-West cooled the weather from the heat of the sun, which shone out in a beautiful clear sky. I had not proceeded far before I heard the sweet music of a murmuring stream, which gave rise to many pleasing associations. The sound was the same that had so often delighted me many years before, and although there is always something sweetly pensive in the noise of a distant stream or water fall, yet it was on this occasion the pleasing recollections it caused, that induced me to consider it as possessing a sort of magic influence.—On arriving at its margin, I took a seat on a stone that lay before me, which commanded a beautiful view of the country for several miles. About two hundred yards above, the stream rippled over some rocks, forming a romantic little cataract; but before me it flowed smoothly and silently along, and the wind scarce-

ly moved its glassy surface—Within its bosom I could discover the little fish sporting to and fro, with the swiftness of thought.—I reflected for awhile that the same great Creator who made us gave being likewise to these little creatures;—that, though we inhabit different elements, they in all probability enjoy their's equally as we do our's—and if we might judge from the gay and sportive manner in which they glide through the waters, they have an unmixed sensation of happiness which we know not—their pleasures seems to be of a nature similar to ours in childhood.

Amidst these thoughts it occurred to me, that it was along these very waters I had so often strolled in boyhood, with my line and angle in hand, and amused myself by torturing such innocent little victims with a painful death. But it was in times when the mind was too much excited by its amusements to reflect a moment how cruelly those amusements were purchased. That cannot surely be an innocent sport which has for its object the destruction of harmless, inoffensive creatures, the works of the same Creator, as capable of pain and misery as ourselves—We should remember—

> "The poor beetle that we tread upon,
> In corporal suffering feels a pang as great
> As when a giant dies ———"

On looking around, there were the towering oak's still extending their ponderous branches far beyond their heavy trunks, so dear in the tale of

youth;—there was the green hill where we had so often held our merry christmas gambols;—and in the distance the same little cottages rose one above another, until they were lost in the blue trees still farther off. The days that this scene now recalled, were long since gone, and the reflection was like a sweet dream of by-past hours.

During these reflections a stranger passing that way with some farming utensils on his shoulder, spoke to me in familiar terms.—It requires but little formality or etiquette among the social inhabitants of the country to make acquaintances, so, without any ceremony he took a seat at my request by my side. He was an interesting looking youth, and although we seldom like to be disturbed in our moments of pensive reflections, yet an interruption is not at all times unpleasant. I soon made my companion acquainted with the subject of my thoughts, and told him I had made a pilgrimage here to live over again the days of my youth.

I found his feelings were warm and sensitive, and his heart immediately felt a sympathy with the subject—for, grasping my hand, he observed—"Indeed sir, it is a pleasant theme, and one on which I have often dwelt with a sorrowful, and yet a fond remembrance."

"I know not," I replied, "why the remembrance shoud be a sorrowful one."

"Ah! my friend," returned he, "*you* may find nothing in these streams, or these hills and woodlands to give you painful recollections, they might

please a poetic or romantic fancy—but mine is a different case.—I have no parents—and every feature in the scene before us, but recalls their death to my memory. I was just old enough to know their love, and feel their loss."

"You truly know then the tenderness of a mother; for he alone who has lost a mother can duly appreciate her worth."

"It is so indeed, my friend," added he;—"like many other blessings—seldom known till they are gone—I remember a neat little stanza I somewhere read."

"We never know how we have loved,
'Till what we most love has departed
For this thing of affection is proved
By the lonely and desolate hearted."

"My soul sickens," continued he, "at the cold—the heartless apathy, evinced by some children towards a parent so affectionate—so lovely I would say—so heavenly; the kindness of such mothers, will be better known when they slumber in the cold grave. The tear will then flow for neglected worth, but no tears, no sorrow can recal the dead. Affection can then only live in memory."

"You speak as you ought said I, and I doubt not you feel the subject of your remarks."

"I do," he replied "but who can describe in an adequate manner the feelings which a recollection of natural fondness awakens. To the orphan—the motherless—the thoughts of childhood are doubly dear. Who but one that has lost a

mother, can tell how dear her early blessings are in the record of memory! We take a melancholy delight in looking upon a mother's grave. It is there I love to pour out the sorrows of my soul. I often visit the hallowed spot—I have knelt upon it—I have kissed it with a fondness savouring of enthusiasm."

I found his feelings were much excited, and I knew from the tremour of his hand, as he took it from mine, and passed it over his face, that his tears had begun to flow.

"In yonder house," he continued, pointing to a low farm, whose thatched roof could be just discovered rising above a group of trees—"in yonder house I lived ten years with the best of mothers—and it was like a fairy vision.—Oh she was an angel to me, and I was all to her.—She smiled as she saw me smile, and wept when she saw me weep. She would tell me as she pressed me to her bosom, that I was all the child she had, and that I resembled my father who was dead. Her last words I shall never forget—farewell William—you will now have no parent but God." It has been so, but God is a kind parent—"I am nigh unto them that are of a broken heart—saith the Lord."

"Yes my friend," said I, "he is always kind to the afflicted who put their trust in him. Worldly minds with all their sensual pleasure, enjoy but little real happiness; but the christian even amidst his afflictions, enjoys a sweet comfort and solace from the love of Heaven."

"True," replied he—"the christian is always contented with his lot, however humble, for he knows how to appreciate the smallest blessing—but the sinner never thinks his cup of bliss is full. He is always yearning after pleasures he can never realize, or pondering over ills which are for the most part, merely imaginary.—Indeed sir, (continued he after a pause) I feel that I would be a christian, and I oftentimes think the happy spirit of my dear mother, is pleading for her child in heaven."

The truly pathetic manner in which he uttered these last words, moved my heart in a feeling of sympathy with his thoughts.....They were followed by a long and fixed gaze upon the clear, blue arched-sky, and then as if he recognized the happy spirit of his departed mother, he clasped his hands together in a sort of extacy, and cried out—"yes—my mother thou art a seraph—thou art an angel of angels."

A smile beamed in his countenance, and I dared not interrupt what seemed to be a holy contemplation.....We both sat in silence, watching the gradual declension of the suns rays—the woods were lengthening their shades over the green lawn—the little birds were fluttering to their nests—and a sweet and pensive twilight now reigned over the scene.——We arose—he gave me a convulsive shake of the hand, and we parted with very little more ceremony than a simple farewell.

I returned with warmer feelings than those with which I came. I felt myself again living over the

days of early boyhood, and I received an interesting lesson from my new companion, of the worth of a mothers love—for it is too seldom duly prized until it is gone.

SKETCH, 4.

THE MOTHER.

"O were it not, that on my cares
One helpless being has a claim,
Soon would I end these torturing fears,
That break my rest, and rack my frame.

Soon would I tempt the dangerous sea,
And to my lovely sufferer fly:
He ne'er again should part with me;
With him I'd live—or with him die."

MRS. MUZZY.

A neat little stone house, which might be partly discovered through a thick cluster of vines and trees, from the road near Somerville, contained the happy family of *Morris Hayes*. They were poor, but Morris was a hard working man, and no farm for many miles round spoke more in favour of the industry of its cultivators. His wife had been bred up in the city—and although she had been educated to many of the refinements of life, she was acquainted with the whole system of domestic duties, and was well calculated to be a good housewife and an amiable partner to a sober

industrious farmer. Never was a couple more supremely blest, in the possession of each others affections. The world seemed to pass smoothly by them. They had every comfort—their wants were few, and all adequately supplied—and there was not a family in the village that did not entertain an affection for Morris Hayes and his wife. They were happy;—but a few weeks often make serious reverses in the smallest domestic circle; and it was so with this.

A war was existing at this time with some of the Indian tribes in the West, and Morris Hayes was one of the little band that Somerville furnished to take up arms against them. The hour of parting drew nigh. The idea of a separation had never occurred to either of them, and to Fanny Hayes particularly, it was like closing the grave upon a beloved relative. They had two children; one a small boy, aged two years, then lying sick with a fever; and a lovely little infant, only seven months old.

But painful as were the circumstances under which he was departing from his family—he was strengthened by the reflection, that he was embarking in a good cause—he considered that he was in a great measure going in defence of his own fire-side. His heart had too often bled at a recital of the horrid butcheries of the Savages within the limits of the state, not to feel an interest in their expulsion. It was in such a cause he left his home—and in such a cause he felt that Heaven would prosper him.

As he was departing—he kissed the pale cheek of his little sick son—and then turning to his wife, said—"Fanny though we part now—it will not be long—Heaven will watch over thee in my absence—It is for thy sake I go—Farewell!"—She hung upon his arm as he was leaving, and wept bitterly.—He raised her head—kissed her cheek, and again attempted to go—But there was *one* being that had not yet received his parting benediction—and the mother's heart, ever most sensitive on such subjects could not fail to remind an affectionate father of the little pledge that lay before him. Their unconscious babe lay sleeping in the cradle; and its amiable mother felt that *it* too should receive a father's farewell. She placed it in his arms—he kissed it several times, and as he gazed upon its opening countenance, like a fair bud unfolding on the bush, a tear for the first time started from his eye. He replaced the child in its mothers arms, and quickly left the room, to conceal the grief which he could no longer repress.—While he hastened to the call of the drum which was beating the preparation to march. She seated herself with a heavy heart by the fire side—now desolate and dreary by the absence of him, she loved with so much tenderness, and affection.

This was but the harbinger of a series of troubles to Fanny Hayes. The little son whom the father left very low of a fever, lingered but a few days. Its life had been already dispaired of, but the blow was doubly afflicting to its mother, on account of the fathers absence. She bore it however,

with firmness, and seemed to carry it, with every other grief, in the dear hope of Morris' speedy return. But alas! how often are our dearest, our most cherished hopes cut off by some unforseen calamity, which leaves the heart a wretched victim of its own bright imaginations! It was thus with her. Morris had not been absent three weeks before news was brought that a detachment, of which he was one, was entirely cut to pieces by the enemy. This blow was too much for her.—Her tears were yet scarcely dry from past griefs—but now she more than wept—she was distracted.—She could have borne almost any thing but this. The world to her was now a dreary waste inhabited by one only, on whom she could yet look with care and fondness—it was her little infant. It was all that Providence had left her, and it was the only living creature she could think upon. Her reason became subject to a melancholy derangement, still she knew and loved her child. What ever might have been the disorder of her mind, her maternal feelings were the same. The instinctive love of a mother towards her offspring is more powerful perhaps than any other feeling in the human breast. The days of infancy are blended with the charms of maternity. A mothers affection like a sacred vigil, watches over the innocent smiles and tear of her child, and fans with panting sighs, the holy calm of its slumbers. Her love, warm as it is natural, exerts her every effort to protect the little innocent from all intruding harm, and should sickness throw a gloom over its unconscious fea-

tures, it is the mother that most feels that sickness—it is the mothers tear that shows the deepest expression of pain and sufferings.

That little being whose smiles had caused its parents hearts to throb for joy while Morris was at home, was now a little angel to its mother. She felt like a lonely wretch, abandoned by all, save the darling object she nourished in her own arms.—Perhaps she doated on it too fondly, and in her affection for the child forgot to pay that devotion due a higher source—her great parent in heaven. Yet none could help admiring the love, while they pitied the sorrows of the mother.

Misfortunes, it is said, seldom come singly—one might think Frances Hayes had already received her proportion of this worlds sorrows.—But they were not to end here. The last staff of all her earthly hopes—her remaining dear child was to be torn from her forever—to leave her a victim to still deeper sorrows.

It is remarkable how suddenly death sometimes sweeps off the greater part of a family! often too those who had before always enjoyed the best possible health.

The infant grew pale and sickly—she saw it fade like a lovely blossom on its own dear parent stem; but her tears and her kisses could not restore the roses to its cheeks—they could not again brighten up its little countenance into a smile, nor give it strength to hold up its drooping head once more. She was soon obliged to relinquish that burden which was dearer to her than life itself. How

many sleepless nights did she linger by the cradle side of her beloved infant, attentively watching its fading countenace as if to catch some latent gleam of returning health; but the morning light would only discover to her increasing symptoms of its approaching end. In the anguish of her heart she ventured to complain. "Is it not enough," said she, "that two dear members should be torn from this once happy abode, but that death should deprive a poor, wretched widow of her last—her only remaining earthly hope? Oh, it is too much —It is too much!" But such complaints will often flow from hearts thus overwhelmed with sorrow. In our troubles we are often apt to imagine the mercy of Providence is closed upon us forever. But we have every reason to think all the sorrows and privations of this life, are intended to effect a good and wise purpose.

The walls of the lonely mansion often sent forth the pensive tones of the wretched mother, as her voice melted in sweet but sorrowing accents over her dying infant.—There was one little song in particular which every school boy in the village could repeat—they felt its meaning for they often mingled their tears with her's as they gathered around her door to hear her sing it over. It ran thus:

Sleep on my babe—for sleep can soften
The ills that rend thy little breast;
The heart whose tears have wept thee often,
Now watches o'er thy pillow'd rest.

Oh, could a calm so holy, ever
  Steal o'er thy mother's aching heart,
It might forget that we must sever—
  That one so lovely must depart.

Sleep on—sweet innocent!—for sorrow
  Too soon will chase that smile away;
Sleep on—though cares may blight the morrow,
  They shall not dim thy smiles to day.

Ah—must that tender frame soon perish—
  Those little eyes be bright no more!—
The only bliss this heart could cherish,
  A mothers last dear hope be o'er!

Alas!—those blossoms soonest wither,
  Which most we prize—dear little one;
But death shall lay us low together—
  I cannot live when thou art gone.

As it drew near its last—the distracted mother sat silently watching each rising motion of its little breast.—It was evening—the sun had gone down, and all was still and solemn—The infant appeared to be in a silent slumber.—Its breast now scarcely heaved—She took it into her arms—pressed it to her bosom—but it was cold!

Many of the villagers called to soothe her, but her sorrows were of that kind which love to weep in silence and alone.—If they spoke to her, she replied only by pointing to the beauteous corpse which lay before her—but she shed no tears—The fountain had been dried up by this last affliction.

"Grief drank the offering ere it reach'd the eye."

But Morris Hayes was not dead. Most of the little band in which he fought was indeed cut to pieces, and he was one of the solitary few who

were taken prisoners, and supposed to be massacred. After suffering many hardships for near ten months, he fortunately effected his escape. He felt more joyful than the captive bird just emancipated from its confinement. He thought of home—of wife and children—He would appear to them as one from the grave.—Nothing could exceed his joyful anticipations as he was returning —It was not long before his cottage was in sight; and then his heart bounded with renewed delight —One thought alone dampened his hopes. It was the recollection of his sick child, whom he left without the expectation of recovery. As he approached nearer the house, he was surprised at the melancholy change of appearances. No smoke ascended from the chimney.—The shrubbery in front had withered away, or was trampled down. The pale fence was not white-washed as usual;—all—all was sadly altered—and he almost doubted whether this could be his former abode. The door was open—he went in and found all was deserted.—He called "*Fanny*," several times, but the empty walls echoed back the dear name. His heart almost shrunk within him—"Where—where can she be!" he several times spoke within himself, and then passed to the garden. But it was no longer the smiling Eden it formerly had been under the hands of Fanny Hayes. All the flower-pots were either thrown down, or broken. The grape-vines were dangling loosely from their frames—Rank weeds were now overgrowing the little beds where formerly sprung up all kinds of

flowers that were grateful to the smell and pleasing to the sight. There were the bee-hives as usual, but not a bee hummed around them. Even the dog-house was deserted and gave signs of its having been long empty. The whole place seemed but the wreck of its former rural simplicity and neatness. "Ah," said he as he cast his eyes around with a look of melancholy dejection—"the hand of Fanny Hayes is not here—poor woman!—she thought I had forsaken her, and she has broken her heart." As he concluded, he observed a little spot in a corner of the garden, which gave more signs of recent cultivation than any other. Even this was a great relief amidst such a ruin of all that had once been dear to him—He hastened to the place, and as he removed some of the thick foliage aside, he saw a white marble head-stone by a grave overgrown with high grass. He immediately closed the scene again, for it appeared but too plain a realization of his fears. His eyes could not at first dwell on what he thought the painful record of his wifes fate.——"It must be so"—said he, after a pause in accents which denoted a feeling of grief and resignation—"but where can those little orphans be?"——He looked again.—It was the grave—not of his wife—but their two little babes. On the stone, he read this inscription.

Wilson Hayes, died August 4th.
Cynthia Hayes, died August 15th.
THIS STONE
was planted by
their affectionate Mother,
FRANCES HAYES,
the afflicted widow of
MORRIS HAYES.

Stranger—pluck not these flowers;
They shade the grave of innocence.

"Yes—the loveliest buds that ever grew"—cried the agonized father as he continued gazing on the stone—"and they are now the blooming flowers of a Heavenly paradise—But, my Fanny, an afflicted *widow!*—Heaven forbid it! It shall not be." He left the sacred spot, and proceeded at once to the house of the nearest neighbour to learn the particulars of his family. Every circumstance was minutely detailed, but the only tidings they could give concerning his wife were—that immediately after the death of her last child she became insane and wandered away—and was never since heard of.—This news pierced him to the heart—he made no reply—but turned to seek his cottage in despair.

"Stop man," cried an old ragged woman, whose face he had never before seen—"do you seek after Fanny Hayes?" "I do" replied Morris—"Ah! sir, she is gone—she went crazy when her little babies died, and her man got killed in the wars, and never saw no peace afterwards.—She was a good soul, that same Fanny Hayes, and we all

loved her. The people used to talk good words to her, but she only wiped her eyes, and said nothing——"

"But has she never been seen since her departure?" enquired Morris.

"No—nobody knew where she went, but her voice is sometimes heard in the moonlight nights singing over the grave of her little ones."

Morris fixed his eyes sternly upon the woman, as though he would penetrate her inmost thoughts, and detect the least deception which her countenance might exhibit. "I thank you woman," said he, "but mark me—if this be false, you shall rue the time you trifled with Morris Hayes!"

The old woman shrunk back in amazement on learning that she was addressing the *husband* of the unfortunate female. She was unable to add any more, for an apparition could not have affected her feelings more strongly. She gazed after Morris as he turned towards his cottage, until he was entirely out of sight, and then turned away somewhat alarmed, for the consequences she apprehended from the communication with the mysterious stranger.

Morris conceived there was something in the old woman's relation not at all improbable. He believed his wife was still living—and he did not discredit the romantic idea of her appearing by moonlight to sing over the grave of her infants.—Her sorrows were quite severe enough to embarrass her reason and the whole story seemed entirely to

correspond with the actual circumstances. He was determined at all events to ascertain the fact.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, a week or two afterwards, that he took his station at a window which overlooked the garden. Every thing was pensively sweet around him. Not a cloud was to be seen in the sky; but here and there a bright star was twinkling forth as if to vie with the mellow light of the great planet. Not the least wind was heard to whisper through the trees—not a leaf stirred; all was hushed. It was such a night that a melancholy being might choose to enjoy in retirement, the solitary reflections of his own bosom:—for nature, of a moonlight night in the country, seems to sympathize with the feelings of a contemplative mind, and to give an interesting turn to all its meditations. After Morris had indulged himself in those reflections for an hour or two, he leaned upon the lattice, and fell into a gentle slumber—his sorrows were lost in a sweet dream, which stole over his senses, and seemed to speak of joys to come. It was a vision such as a troubled mind seldom enjoys, and there is joy even in a dream.—A gentle strain of music broke upon his ear—it seemed like the song of a seraph, for it was heavenly sweet. He awoke—the dream vanished—but the voice still lingered.—He listened, and heard the following verse of a beautiful hymn:——

"Alas—how chang'd that lovely flow'r—
Which bloom'd and cheer'd my heart;
Fair fleeting comfort of an hour,
How soon we're call'd to part."

He knew the sound—he looked—and beheld, by the pale light of the moon, the form of his beloved *wife!*—at the grave of her children. Quick as thought, he hastened into the garden. At the sound of his footsteps, she turned—shrieked, and Morris approached in time to catch her in his arms, as she fell. He carried her slender form into the house; and as he watched over it, a convulsive feeling ran through his whole frame. He trembled, for he feared that he had only arrived to witness her dying moments. Such was his impression during two hours, in which she gave no signs of life. But the scene soon changed. Her countenance gradually lost its livid, deathly hue, as animation returned. She at length opened her eyes—they caught the tender glance of her husbands, as he knelt by her side—a smile brightened upon her features—she clasped his hand in her own, and pressed it to her bosom, as a token of recognition. It was not long before she was entirely restored to health, and what was even more grateful to the feelings of Morris, reason had again assumed the sway in her mind. The reappearance of him whom she had thought was lost to her forever, was the only probable circumstance calculated to restore her to her senses. There feelings can not be minutely described under such circumstances—they can hardly be imagined.

The cottage soon again assumed its former neatness and regularity. It was like a new existance to the affectionate couple—and they loved each other now, even more than ever. It was in

the early part of summer, and the hand of Fanny Hayes was soon again visible in the beauties of the garden. The flower-pots were all arranged out, and filled as formerly. The neighbours now came flocking to that house which they had all along shunned as haunted by some evil spirit. All that need be added, is that Morris and Fanny Hayes were again blessed with children—and a happier family from that time, could not be found in the neighbourhood.

SKETCH, 5.

FRIENDS MEETING.

"Before you can be completely armed with arguments and reasons, you will be assailed by numbers whose prepossessions and prejudices far more than their arguments and reasons attach them to the other side."

HANNAH MOORE.

Among the many prejudices which prevail with one denomination or sect of people against another, that against the society called *Friends* is perhaps the most general and least reasonable.—Their extreme simplicity and disregard of all kind of outward fashion, have it is true, made them somewhat singular from the rest of mankind; and the very fact of their not conforming to every capricious change of fashion, has often made them objects of ridicule or childish prejudice, with those who think dress and outward show the best recommendations of inward character. But if every sect of christians possessed as many estimable virtues as the Quakers, (so called) society would have little need of criminal laws. From their habitual silence, many have pronounced them a cold

and reserved people—but this is not the case. It might often appear so at first, but on acquaintance, no persons will be found more kind—more benevolent, and more intelligent, than the people called Friends.

The following sketch may give an imperfect view of this prejudice, as it often exhibits itself in the world.

One clear spring morning a horse and gig containing Charles Sanford and Henry Wilmuth, two young intimate friends, was passing rapidly on the road to Somerville. The sun had just risen, and his early beams as they crossed obliquely over the green fields, threw a lively lustre on the transparent dew drops which glittered upon every leaf and spray. The air was fresh and fragrant, and the little birds were warbling their matin songs with the sweetest melody.

Charles Sanford was a resident of Philadelphia, and was then on a visit with his friend to the family of the Wilmuths, who resided near Somerville. They were plain friends, and Henry Wilmuth, their son, had been brought up in the same persuasion. Charles had been educated in the Episcopal form of service, and was rather more gay than his friend in dress and manners. He was very tenacious of his own mode of worship and entirely opposed to all others, particularly to that adopted by the Friends. And from the great intimacy that existed between him and his friend, he never hesitated to avow his sentiments, however

severely they might touch upon the society to which the other belonged.

It might here be wondered that two, entertaining a dissimilarity of views on a subject so important, could be such close and agreeable companions. But there may be a harmony and congeniality in the general dispositions of individuals, notwithstanding they may differ on particular subjects. The general character of the human heart is not to be judged by one or two of its operations. We are all liable to aberrate from the paths which nature originally designed we should pursue. But they are like the meanderings of a slow, majestic stream, whose bosom may be ruffled by an occasional rock or precipice, while it still keeps its native bed and continues to flow on as usual.

But to return from this digression—The warm friendship that had grown up between the two young men, had been acquired by a few years residence of Henry in the City, and Charles was now visiting the residence of his friend for the first time. Charles was of a more lively turn than Henry, of a good countenance, and an unblemished reputation—full of sensibility, and very warm in his friendships. Henry was a handsome faced youth, and one whose sedate and reflective behaviour might speak him several years older than his real age.

The two friends were never in want of subjects to converse upon. Their feelings were always alive in each others society to any subject of conversation that might be started between them. As

usual, among other themes they fell into a discussion upon that on which they could never agree, viz—the peculiar difference of religious worship between the society of Friends and all other christians. The dispute became quite warm. Charles bitterly denounced all Quaker customs, as he called them, and Henry as warmly defended them. The argument continued, at intervals, during the whole of the journey, and it was not concluded until they turned the narrow lane which led to the house of Henry's parents.

"Well," said Charles—"this is one of the few points on which nature intended we should never agree."

"You should rather say," replied Henry, "that education planted this difference between us. We are influenced more by early impressions than we sometimes imagine. We frequently impute that to nature which is entirely the result of habit. The continued diversity of religious opinions may be owing in a great degree to the different sentiments to which mankind are trained up from youth—We observe that children seldom depart from the religious creed of their parents—which proves that education gives the mind, in these things at least, a stronger bias than nature. But, my friend, we shall soon have other themes to talk about, you are now in sight of *Greenwood.*

Charles cast his eyes along the lane, and saw a thick cluster of Buttenwoods, over which light clouds of smoke were gently curling and mingling with the pure atmosphere above.—It was about

sun set; and nature appeared again in beauties similar to those they had enjoyed in the morning. The birds were fluttering to their little homes—the notes of the lone whipperwill were heard above—while in the distance might be seen the weary farmer returning from his fields to his cottage-home, after a hard, but useful day's toil.

Charles had not long contemplated this scene, so interesting and novel to his feelings, before his attention was attracted by another not less so—the beautiful cottage of Greenwood now stood full before him. It was a large stone building, with a piazza in one front, and almost overshadowed on the other with tendrills of sweetbrier and honeysuckles. A large garden fenced in with white pallisades extended down from the back of the house, and on another side was a beautiful green lawn, with a row of large holmes on either side. It was what might be well called an elegant country retirement, and to Charles Sanford, who had seldom enjoyed a country life, it promised a scene of rural pleasure which he had not before anticipated.

A young neat looking female was standing at the outer gate looking earnestly towards the gig as it approached. It was Harriet Wilmuth, who had left the house on hearing the noise of the gig, to welcome the return of her brother Henry, who was then momentarily expected by the family. On perceiving a second person in the gig, and a stranger, she retired to the threshold of the door, and awaited until they drove up and alighted.

The meeting between Harriet and her brother was very affectionate. They loved each other as brother and sister should do—long absence made his return the more dear. Charles Sanford was then introduced, and they all proceeded into the house. After the smiles and tears and welcomes that expressed the feelings of the family on the return of Henry—Charles was introduced as his friend, in a plain familiar manner—and it was not long before he was treated as one of the family—no other form or ceremony being used in his presence than such as a cordial welcome required.

Harriet Wilmuth was one of those artless, innocent young ladies, who are the more interesting from their disposition to conceal or at least not to display their charms. She was what a plain, sensible man would call a very lovely girl. She knew but little about city fashions, and practised none of them. She was, it is true, destitute of what many consider the essential accomplishments of an attractive female—such as music, dancing, drawing, &c. But then she had a mind richly stored with good reading, and her conversation and manners evidently told that she had been accustomed to the best society in the neighbourhood. Her dress, like herself, was entirely plain and unostentatious. As her mind was pure and devoid of affectation, so was her attire, free from those useless artificial appendages, which are so much in fashion in the female world.

But this very simplicity, lovely as it was, appeared homely and unsightly in the eyes of Charles

Sanford. He had been used to the dress and gayety of dancing assemblies—and while he felt the force of her charms, which were irresistable to him, even in their quaker dress, (as he called it) he could not help regretting to himself, that she belonged to a society which prevented her from displaying all those beauties in a more favourable light.

The evening passed, highly agreeable to the young friends. Charles felt as one of the family, for that genuine unaffected welcome which distinguishes the society of Friends, had communicated a social warmth to his feelings, which made him like one in the midst of old bosom friends.

The next day Henry and Charles were conversing together, alone in the room, and again fell into an argument upon their old subject of quaker discipline. Charles was as irrefragible as ever, and did not hesitate to pronounce their religious service strange, unmeaning, and ineffectual.

"When did you ever attend our meeting?" asked Henry, "I cannot say I was ever in any one," replied Charles, "but I have heard all about them."

"Rather then, my friend, suspend your opinion until you can judge personally of the effect upon your own heart."

"But," returned Charles "I am as well acquainted with the practice of Friends Meeting now, as ever I shall be. The leading feature in your worship is silence; and I am certain there can be but little devotion manifested in an uninterrupted stillness."

"It is that silence, my friend, which sheds such a holy influence on the soul. There is a sacred sublimity in silence, and all who are given in the least to serious meditation, cannot but raise their hearts on such an occasion, to the great Being who created them. *We* have no fashions—no outward show—nothing external to call an assemblage to *our* places of worship. We there have a congregation of individuals met together to pour out the offering of a contrite heart, to a God that judges of the heart alone. "The Lord seeth all hearts, and understandeth all the imagination of the thoughts."*—There is a sweetness in solitude, but the solitude of a large assembly (if I may so speak) has a solemn effect on a thinking mind, which no seclusion—no sequestered retreat can give."

"You dwell upon you favourite silence with the fervour of a poet"—said Charles playfully. "Silence may have its influence on some occasions—but Harry, give us *some* preaching—we go to church, you know, to *hear*, as well as to *think!* '*How shall they hear without a preacher*' says St. Paul."

"Do not mistake me, my friend, it is not an uninterrupted silence; we too have our preachers; but not those who make it a profession—I grant you."

"Those are the very ones you should have," replied Charles, "we want educated men—unencumbered by worldly business, who can elucidate scripture with the same facility that an attorney can expound law, but what are *your* preachers?"

* 1. Chronicles, xxviii. 9.

"A learned man may clothe his ideas, in what the world would call prettier language, but remember Charles, when God calls a preacher, (and I think but few in our society, ever speak publicly, without such a call.) *He* gives him words more forcible than any acquired by human learning. A communion of hearts is best felt in the absence of all ornament. When the heart is really warmed with its subject, particularly with so sweet a one as religion, it generally, inspires it with a native strength of language, which, however plain, or humble never fails to be solemnly impressive. At least, I would judge from my own feelings."

"Every one is entitled to his opinion" said Charles, "and I admit a man cannot always control that opinion. But, Harry, I must still think you quakers have many strange customs about you —your dress too! Why is it you dress so differently from all other people?"

"I might, perhaps with more propriety ask why, all other people dress so differently from us? The Quakers, as you term them, have never changed *their* form of dress. It is you that have deviated from the becoming simplicity of former times."

"But" returned Charles, "would you attire us in the dangling robes of antiquity. The world changes, and so must appearances. How, for instance would our pretty Belles look figured off in the hoop and furbelow of the days of good queen *Bess?* Not to slight the Quaker lasses—I would

observe friend Harry, that if it was not for those little plain bonnets——"

"And what of the little plain bonnets"—interrupted Harriet, with a pleasing smile, who had just entered unobserved with a plain bonnet on—"you are not abusing them I hope?"

Charles coloured up, as he caught the laughing expression of Harriets soft blue eyes.

"No Harriet"—said he "excuse me—but—I was only going to observe that your plain bonnets would look much better with artificials in them."

"A very artificial conclusion," replied Harriet, artfully, "I presume Charles, you love to gambol among the flowers. No wonder you are so partial to rural scenery—but pray—would all your pretty roses and nosegays, very tastefully arranged, in a flaring leghorn, make us any *better* than the poor little plain bonnet?"

"They would make you *prettier*, friend Charley thinks," said Henry.

"Nay—nay"—replied Charles, I meant nothing; and what availes this parley?—The bonnets may do well enough, and any thing becomes Harriet."

Harriet cast a smile on her brother as she turned her head and left the room, making a short apology to Charles, for her interference; and here the conversation ended.

When Sabbath morning arrived, Charles was invited by the family to accompany them to Friends Meeting. He would have declined, but from a respect to appearances he consented. The meeting-house was situated about half a mile off,

and as the weather was fine, they concluded to walk. Most of the way was along the beautiful narrow lane which led up to Greenwood. It was shaded on both sides by rows of trees and thick woods. Charles and Harriet walked together in the rear of the rest of the family. Somerville church bell sent forth its sacred peals at intervals, and now and then a little party of the villagers might be seen on the distant green, on their way to church.

It was not long before they reached the Meeting House; an antiquated stone building that had apparently stood a century. It was early yet, and all who had assembled were without the doors of the meeting house. Here were many friends who had not seen each other for many days. Smiles and greetings were there passed between many who seldom met but on these occasions. As the time of meeting approached, the assembly gradually dropped in, and took their seats, the males on one side and the females separated on the other—while before them sat the elders elevated on seats higher than the rest. The interior of the building was extremely plain, and shewed nothing in the shape of ornament.

In a few moments all was as still as the grave—not a whisper—not a breath was heard within the walls. The rustling of the leaves in the wind without, alone broke the sacred stillness. Charles now sat in such an assembly for the first time.—There was nothing around him to attract his eye, and he gave himself up to a solemn contemplation.

It was not the silence of a solitary seclusion that threw a reflecting turn over his mind.—It was a silence that inspired him with a sacred awe—for still as it was, he felt that he was in the midst of many thinking beings who were that moment communicating in their hearts with the things of Heaven.

In the midst of this silence one of the elder friends arose and addressed the meeting. It was a short but impressive sermon, and in the course of it, he touched upon the uncharitable feelings, and illiberal prejudices which prevailed between the different religious denominations. There was something in the address which touched the feelings of Charles, as though it had a personal application to him. He therefore paid more attention to every word than perhaps he otherwise would have done. When the speaker had concluded, the same profound silence prevailed, which continued until meeting broke.

After several exchanges of salutations among the Friends (which is very customary in the country) for a considerable time after meeting, the family collected together again, and proceeded towards home. Charles, with Harriet and her brother Henry, walked together, while the parents went on before.

"Well Charles," said Henry, taking him by the hand "now, how are you pleased with Friends Meeting?"

"Now Charles," said Harriet, "answer with your usual candor—we expect you to be severe."

"Better than I expected," said he, "but——" here he made a pause, and bent his head as if in serious reflection. "But what?"—interrupted Harriet, that contingent '*but*' has something ominous about it."

"Our friend loves to qualify his remarks with careful provisos"—observed Henry—"outposts to prevent a surprise upon the main body."

"There is still much to be objected to"—continued Charles, in a serious, but hesitating tone, that indicated an equivocal feeling within.

"And what that you have not already objected to?" enquired Henry.

"Nothing—nothing!—I have only realized much of what I had before heard."

"Well—your decision."

"Friends Meeting has its merits and its faults—but I ought not to judge severely. I admired the speaker, and hope to profit by his remarks—but I do protest against wearing the hat in a place of worship—and indeed we have it censured in scripture—at least nearly to the same effect." St. Paul says "*Every man praying, or prophecying with his head covered, dishonoreth his head.*"

"Charles, I will not now enter into another discussion of this theme—you know how fruitful it is!—Nor am I fond of discussing scriptural quotations to aid our opinions. Many scriptural passages may be aptly quoted that admit of no difference in their acceptation, but they are too often perverted to correspond with our own particular way of thinking. Every religious sect, however

opposite in doctrine, professes to have the great body of the sacred writings in its favour. Thus young and weak minds, see the Bible shamefully forced to uphold the most glaring contradictions—presenting a heterogeneous mixture of divine truths. Besides, my friend, it requires a *thorough* knowledge of the sacred writings to enable us to understand and explain particular parts. There is a beautiful harmony in the whole Bible, and it has been emphatically and truly said, that scripture is the best elucidation of scripture. But, Charles I am glad to hear you say, you are better pleased than you expected.

"And I doubt not," said Harriet, "our friend will be still more favourable with us, when he becomes more familiar with our form, or rather *absence* of formes."

"If I have ever judged rashly," returned Charles "I shall be happy to amend my error."

Very little else passed, during their walk home. Charles was evidently altered in some way or other; either he was seriously impressed in favour of the meeting, or was ashamed after the address he had heared, to advance his objections with the same freedom as before. It sometimes, though seldom, happens that the strongest prejudices are rooted out by some strong and sudden appeal to the reason.

Charles remained with his friend at Greenwood about four weeks. The subject of their former disputes was frequently introduced during that time; but he was now less disposed to contro-

vert the arguments of Henry. Harriet was likewise daily gaining upon his affections—the plain bonnet, and her simple dress, was no longer displeasing in his eyes—she was now to him a lovely creature in every respect. What pleased her, likewise pleased him. This indeed might have been one cause of weaning him from his prejudices; but the most evident one was a full acquaintance of the manners and customs of the Friends. He found them very unlike what they had been represented, and was astonished with himself that he had before entertained so unfavourable an opinion of a people he now so cordially esteemed.—He had not only dropped most of his prejudices, but even united in many of the practices he before condemned.

About twenty years after this period, a friend of his early years, was passing through Somerville, and was met by an old quaker gentleman in plain drab coloured clothes, who accosted him by name in a very familiar manner, at the same time taking him by the hand. The stranger at first did not know him, but he soon recognized in his smiling features, the person of his old acquaintance——*Charles Sanford!* The interview was not less pleasing than unexpected. Charles invited him to his house, where he was introduced to his affectionate wife—the lovely *Harriet Wilmuth!* Four fine children were the offspring of their happy connection. He was now as plain a friend as any in the village, and was one of the heads of the meeting. The two friends sat down by a cheerful fire, and in the midst

of the stories of their early boyhood, Charles Sanford dwelt with no small interest upon that of his early prejudices against a society in which he now found himself so contented and happy.

SKETCH, 6.

THE VILLAGE GRAVE-YARD.

"Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell forever laid—
The rude forefathers of the Hamlet sleep."

GRAY'S ELEGY.

It was in one of those little summer excursions which the citizens frequently enjoys away from the bustle of town, that I stopped at the village of Somerville—the morning was fine and breezy, and every thing about the little spot seemed calculated for domestic felicity. The village was remarkably silent, and many houses were closed. On the top of a little hill I could just distinguish the little steeple of the village Church rising above the trees, and around it several tomb stones, which here and there shewed their white marble through the clustering foilage. After I had partaken of a hearty dinner, I directed my ramble to the village grave-yard. The Church was an antiquated looking stone building, and before it stood a large tree on which were carved many names of the last century which from their time-worn and mutilated appearance, indicated that some of their authors at

least were now silently reposing in the dust, while perhaps their only inscriptions were the works of their own living hands. After contemplating these perishing mementos a few minutes, I passed into the grave-yard and saw a place opened for the reception of another inhabitant of this consecrated little village. I was alone, and gave myself up to one of those melancholy but pleasing reflections which so often absorb the mind over the cemetries of the dead.

The grave is at any time calculated to give our thoughts a pensive, or melancholy turn. We often delight to awaken past regrets, and to bid farewell again to the dying friend or parent of our early affection. But when alone, in some distant secluded spot, the impulse to this feeling is always much stronger, for the solitude of nature hallows the grave with a kind of sympathetic charm, and throws the mind into a superstitious reverence, as if the mouldering dead were still visited by their disembodied spirits.

I had not indulged myself long in this strain before I was awakened from my reverie by the knolling of the village Church bell. There seemed to be something very plaintive in the sound. I know not whether it was from the pensive state of my mind, and the peculiar solemnity of the place, but I thought they were the most impressive notes I ever heard. The interval between each sound was longer than usual, and the reverberation from the surrounding hills and woodlands was sweetly melancholy. In about half an hour I perceived a carriage in the

shape of a hearse, followed by a little train on foot, approaching from the village. There appeared to be about sixty persons, which was a good proportion of the inhabitants of the place, and seemed to shew, I thought, the general affection which mostly prevails in country villages. The procession moved slowly along in the deepest silence; the bell still sending forth its death-like tones. Now and then part of the train would be hid in some intervening valley, describing a gentle undulation like the waving ocean, or a distant vessel gliding over its soft green bosom.

They entered the grave-yard. Many sorrowful countenances were assembled round the grave to see the last ceremony over their departed friend. The bell had ceased, and nothing was now heard but an occasional deep drawn sigh mingling with the gentle breeze that rustled through the surrounding leaves. The corpse was the surviving parent of a large family of young children, whose weeping eyes were alternately fixed upon the narrow tenement of their beloved relative, and the dark hole in which it was so soon to be consigned as food for worms. After a pious and appropriate address from the curate, in which he made some tender and feeling allusions to the young mourners, the coffin was let down and the body committed to its kindred dust. Each couple gave a final look into the grave and they all quietly departed, except three or four interesting looking young girls, whose attention seemed particularly engaged with the ceremony. The sexton had not

finished filling up the grave, when one of the little misses said to her companions—"Come, let us go to the grave of poor Mary." "Poor Mary" was repeated by some of the rest, when they all proceeded to a remote part of the yard, where there was a neat little bower overrun with tendrills and honeysuckles, evidently designed to shade some favourite spot. My curiosity was excited, and I followed them near enough to this sacred retreat to distinguish a head-stone with the following inscription:

SACRED
to the Memory of
MARY WILSON,
she was
a dutiful daughter—an affectionate sister,
and
an amiable companion.
She reposed in the arms of her Saviour,
May 3d, 1819—aged 12 years.

The youthful bud that's nipt in early time,
Dies but to bloom in some more genial clime.

I distinctly heard some of them repeat the inscription several time over, and as they reiterated the name of "poor Mary," they wiped their eyes, as evidence of their unalienable affection for their departed young friend.

"Will she never come back from this cold place to play with us?" said the youngest of the little company.

"Oh, no!" replied another, "she now lives up there; (pointing towards the Heavens) she is happier now, Matilda, than when she played with us."

"But how can she lie here, and be up there too?" enquired the first.

"I dont know, but Mama says she is—for she was such a good girl."

"I went to see her when she was sick," said Matilda," and she kissed me. I went again, and she was laid all in white, and when I kissed her she could'nt kiss me again, she was so very cold."

"Poor Mary was dead and did not know you."

"Was she ever so before?"

"No, dear,—we only die once, and then they put us in the cold grave, like poor Mary."

"And do we never come back?" returned Matilda.

"No—never."

"Must we all go there—Mama and Papa too?"

"Yes—our dearest friends and relations must all be buried."

Matilda wiped the tears from her little eyes as she said—"when mama goes to be buried, I will go too; for I don't want to leave her."

The rest of the company during this dialogue were looking silently on the head-stone, or gathering the little wildflowers which sprung up luxuriantly about the grave. Their hearts seemed to be strongly moved by the memorial of the virtues of the tenant that reposed in the little heap before them, and the chaste couplet which followed it.—I had never known the object that elicited their grief—but I could not help blending my feelings with theirs, and a tear started from my eye. I knew what it was to lose a dear friend; and when

I associated the amiable qualities depicted on the tomb-stone with their looks, I felt that their grief was not like the transient regrets, or cares that throw a momentary gloom over the faces of children, but it was deep and solemn. The young company left the spot, and as they passed me I observed the couplet of the grave-stone was neatly marked on some of their handkerchiefs.

The Sexton returned soon after and left me the only living inhabitant of the place, save the feathered songsters which perched upon the overhanging bows, or the brood of insects that sported along the grass. I had often thought there was a great deal of idle pageantry and vanity in erecting tomb-stone over the inconscious dead, with glowing inscriptions commemorative of their virtues. I thought it at best, but an empty tribute to worth which could never be benefitted thereby; and had almost indulged the notion of many, that even the bare name engraved on a simple head-stone, is vain and unnecessary. But my opinion was now entirely changed. I felt convinced—fully convinced by the effect I had just witnessed on the minds of the children, that such inscriptions are not only consolotary to the friends and relatives of the deceased, but that they give them a relish and desire, to improve in the same virtues. It has been emphatically and truly said—"By honouring the dead, we excite the emulation of the living." And the maxim was strongly exemplified in the present case. In contemplating the grave of a departed friend, a short but simple detail of

his virtues always sweetens the remembrance of his worth, and leads us to appreciate good qualities with more warmth in future.

I by no means alluded to those fulsome eulogiums which we sometimes see on tombs, flattering the deceased with virtues they never possessed.—Such inscriptions hold out falsehoods of the most impious nature, and can only be respected by a remote posterity. But a faithful epitaph awakens many latent virtues—a grave, many moral and religious reflections. A monumental inscription seems like a voice from eternity. It is a serious admonition from a serious monitor. It tells pious young, that

> The youthful bud that's nipt in early time
> Dies but to bloom in some more genial clime.

SKETCH, 7.

THE LOVE ADVENTURES OF

TOM LUMPKIN.

"O!—and I forsooth in love!—I that have been love's whip;
A very beadle to a humorous sigh;
A domineering pedant o'er the boy,
Than whom no mortal so magnificent!
This wimped, whining, purblind, wayward boy,
This senior-junior, giant-dwarf don Cupid;
Regent of love-rhymes—lord of folded arms,
The annointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Dread prince of petticoats;—O my little heart!—
And I to be a corporal in his field;—
What? I!——I love!—I sue!—I seek a wife!"

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST.

Tom Lumpkin was one of those easy simple sort of beings, who are scarcely capable of making friends or enemies, but who always attract a crowd around them, when abroad, of those persons who are fond of having a bull to crack their jokes upon. Tom was universally known in the neighbourhood of the village as a lazy lout of a fellow, who idled most of the day away, and in the evening went

sparking, as he termed it, among the ladies. The girls delighted in no sport more than to get Tom in their company; but though he was the laughing stock of the whole place, no one bore it better. In fact he was a good natured fellow, and had no small conceit of his own abilities. I shall not take room to describe his appearance in detail; let the reader immagine a foolish slovenly looking being, dragging one foot after the other, like a heavy piece of mechanism—loitering about the porch of a village tavern—or, basking in the blazing sun, on a hot summers day, on the high meadow grass, and he will have a picture of Tom Lumpkin.

Tom always considered himself a great favourite with the ladies; and it was only when he designed visiting them, that he thought it worth while to put on decent clothes. There was one female in his favourite circle to whom he took a great fancy, or at least his professions appeared so. Her name was Dolly Pringle. A young lady of some pretentions to worth and beauty—and the only child of a wealthy old farmer. Tom was as poor as a beggar; and he thought nothing would be finer than to get into Dolly's good favour; so he paid her marked attention. Whenever a little party was assembled, Tom was always seated behind, or at the side of his Dolly. If she moved he followed like a shadow; and when the company separated, he took care *she* should not go home unattended, whatever might become of the rest of the company.

Dolly soon perceived by Tom's frequent attentions, that she was about having a *serious lover* dangling after her. She thought it prudent therefore to alter her conduct towards him, and accordingly requested him to discontinue his visits, as they were not agreeable to her father. This sudden reverse staggered Tom a little, but produced no change in his attention. She reproved—and Tom only declared he loved her more than ever. She called him an impudent fellow—and he called her in turn, a pretty angel. Dolly's father at length, interfered, and forbade him the house. Tom absented himself for awhile, and returned as usual. What was to be done?—A scheme was concerted. The next night he tapped at the door, he was politely invited in, and requested to seat himself —"Ah, ha!"—muttered he to himself—"nothing like perseverance—faint heart never won a fair lady—thought they'd find out my good parts at last." The undefatigable lover had hardly finished his soliloquy, before two of Mr. Pringle's workmen entered the room——"Is this him," said one, as he took Tom by the collar—"Yes," returned the other—"that's the fellow, give it to him well," and they did give it to him most soundly with leather straps—which appeared to be the tough remnants of some old bridle. Tom screamed with all his might, and held on with his utmost strength to the chair he sat upon. A scuffle ensued, and it was not until the whole chair came to pieces that they forced him from his grasp, and pulled him out of the house. Tom's back felt

none the better for his visit; and he groped his way home cursing the day that leather straps were invented.

A whole week passed and no Tom appeared. They now gave him up, and much did it please them. One evening Dolly was seated alone, congratulating herself on her good success in getting rid of a troublesome plague, when she heard a gentle knock on the door—She hastened to it, and lo!—there was poor Tom. "*Fine evening Dolly—how's your Daddy?*"—Dolly made no reply—but suddenly shut the door in his face and retired up stairs, to muse anew over the cause of her late vexations. About 11 o'clock the family were preparing for bed, when Mr. Pringle went through the house to see all safe. On entering the parlour who should he find, alone in the dark, but their old tormentor. Tom, very patiently waiting to see if Dolly would not return, But now no time was to be lost. He remembered his former reception, and for the first time in his life, he made out to run, and escaped by the outer door, not however without a few rather ungentle kicks from the old man.

It was evident now that no force or severe measures could put an end to Tom's persevering addresses; so they had recourse to stratagem..... Tom had scraped up money enough some time previous to purchase one quarter of a lottery ticket, and every one knew the number, for it was his greatest boast. Dolly's father very well knew that it was his money, and not his daughter, that

attracted Tom. A friend was engaged to inform Tom that Mr. Pringle had met with some sudden losses and would consequently be obliged to fail. The story was well told, and with such an air of sincerity that Tom could not undertake to doubt it, and his extended mouth and eyes evinced no small mortification. After staring in this manner upon the stranger a few minutes, he said—"Dont you think that Dolly of his is too proud? She cant hold a candle to Peggy Fritz."

"I have no time for small matters" replied the stranger, I have good news for you Mr. Lumpkin —I have just returned from the city, and—"

"And what?" cried Tom, catching him by the coat sleeve—"and you have drawn"——

"The high prize!"—interrupted Tom.

"It came out three days ago" said the other.

"I knew it—I knew it," cried Tom—"50,000 Dollars for Tommy Lumpkin—that is to say, one quarter of it—I knew it, ha, ha, ha."

Tom was now a new man—he jumped—ran—laughed—halloed—and committed every foolish antic he could think of; but in truth he thought of nothing but the prize.

The stranger was leaving him, when Tom cried —"stop—do you know that Dolly Pringle?"— "slightly," said the other—"well here, tell her that her dear Tommy cant come there no more, and not to take it hard."

The stranger bowed assent and left him.

He went straightway to his old sweetheart, Peggy Fritz, a fat, sleepy sort of a being, like

himself, and who had been much neglected during Toms adventures after his Dolly.

But Peggy had a more faithful heart; and it was only to put on an old straw bonnet, and hobble over two or three stubble fields, to the squire's to be united in the bonds of wedlock. Tom promising to pay the fee when he returned from Philadelphia with his prize.

"And now Peggy, my duck, said Tom, locking his wifes arm in his own—"dont you see how happy we'll be? Think of them there round dollars, eh!—why dont you laugh ducky?"

"Ah, Tommy!" sighed the Bride in a melancholy drawl. "But dang it, ducky—there's no use of sticking out your lips about it. Come along, we must rig the old mare for town this very night."

"What—not to night Tommy!"—why folks will think how we've run off without paying our honest debts."

"Let 'em"—said Tom, briefly—"I can buy 'em and sell 'em."

"Alas!—but Tommy——"

"Now Ducky, shut you're pan—dang it, no use fighting afore we get back."

The happy pair soon reached home. The reader must know Tom had hired a room which served for kitchen, parlour and cellar, and place to keep his old mare, which was the chief property he possessed. But Peggy had collected a tea kettle—a bed, an old pine table—a chair with three legs, and a stool—one knife, three forks, and two

spoons—so they were altogether qualified to commence house-keeping.

The old mare was taken from the stable—but how was Peggy to accompany Tom? He endeavoured in vain to borrow a cart or waggon, and he could not think of leaving his loving bride at home alone;—he therefore made arrangements to place her on behind him, and away they went to town. The old mare grunted and stumbled most wofully under her load, for Peggy was a very corpulent woman. The journey however was passed very agreeably, for they were big with hopeful expectations; Tom beguiled the time away by debating on his extraordinary good luck, and how fine they would live in future. Peggy should have as many cows and milk-pans, as she wished—she should have a new churn, a new frock, and every comfort she might desire. They would have a horse a piece to ride upon—and a dozen hands should be hired to farm the place—in short Tom declared he would live an independent gentleman, and Peggy should be the happiest woman in the neighbourhood.

It was near two days before they reached town; and worn down as the whole trio were, Tom's impatients would not permit him to rest before he received the prize; so straitway thy bolted towards the lottery office, in broad day-light, with about thirty children in their wake, dignifying the procession with their merry huzzas. On arriving at the Lottery Office, the difficulty now was for Peggy to dismount—and they sorely felt the want of a

horse-block. Tom got off, and attempted to lift his loving bride from the saddle, but she being much the larger, the weight was too great for him, and down they both fell into a large gutter.—A scene of such splashing and foaming then ensued as was never before observed in the streets of Philadelphia. Tom was soon on his feet, but poor Peggy still lay, blowing like a porpoise; and the unfeeling crowd, which had now swelled to upwards of a hundred persons, had not sympathy enough to help her from her doleful situation—but all stood laughing apparently much tickled with the misfortunes of the affectionate couple before them. Tom at last succeeded in helping his wife up, and began to wipe her down as an ostler would use a currycomb;—consoling her at the same time by saying—"never mind ducky, its an old *adverb*, that how, we always have to wade through fire and water to get to Dame Forten."

In about half an hour they were in a little better plight and into the Brokers office they went.

"Mr. Broker"—said Tom in a haughty tone, elevating his head, with his hat cocked on one side—"Mr. Broker—I want the prize I drawed."

"What number"—asked the Broker.

Tom pulls out the ticket and bawls number *forty leven thou*——No!—that aint it—*Four hundred and 'levenly 'leven*———No!—Dang it—Mr. Broker, you read it—got dirty water in my eyes."

The Broker takes the ticket and reads—"No. 4111——".

"Aye that's it"—says Tom—"heres a wallet for the money."

"Stop," said the Broker, "I will examine it." After turning over several leaves of the book, he pronounced—No. 4111—BLANK."

Tom stared, with eyes as large as bullets, first on the Broker, then on Peggy; and without uttering a syllable, he flew like lightning out of the door—sprung on the old mare—galloped off, and was never heard of after. It was said, however, a person answering Toms description was seen on the banks of the Schuylkill late at night, soon after, but these were the only tidings that could ever be gathered of poor Tom. Peggy succeeded in arriving at her old home, vowing most bitterly, she would never have any thing to do with such another as *Tom Lumpkin.*

SKETCH, 8.

THE STORM.

"Oft have I seen a sudden storm arise,
From all the warring winds that sweep the skies;
With such a force the flying rack is driven,
And such a winter wears the face of heaven."

DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.

If rural scenery is disrobed of its verdant mantle, and devested of those beauties which cheer the citizen and brace his languid frame, by the frigid hand of winter, the humble cottager still enjoys a peaceful felicity by his evening fire side.—Though the winds and the tempest may rage without, he is snug and comfortable by a large hickory fire crackling in a chimney place nearly capacious enough to contain a clever sized family. Here he may amuse the younger branches of his family by rehearsing tales of other times, or pass the hours over some old favourite book, whose mutilated leaves might tell that it had not been a neglected article for half a century. His thoughts seldom extend beyond his own farm, or his immediate

neighbours—and he is happy with his little stock of knowledge. Without many wants, his little store is ample. He is satisfied with a moderate portion of earthly treasure, and contentment is happiness.

> "Man wants but little here below,
> Nor wants that little long."

It was in the dreary month of December, when my friend *Harry Fielding*, and myself were on a journey to visit a friends in a remote part of the country. It was bitter cold, and a deep crust of snow covered the ground. The sharpness of the weather, however, did not prevent us from enjoying the beauty of the scene. The red sun was just declining behind the western hills, and his last rays shed a lively luster over the chrystal landscape, which seemed even more interesting than the bloom of midsummer. The tranquility however was of short duration. We loitered about until it became quite dark, when a fresh wind blew from the North East, and a heavy black cloud arose majestically from the horizon. We quickened the pace of our horses, but the storm gained on us, and the whole heavens above were shrowded in portentous darkness. Not a star shed its lonely glimmer—not a cottage lamp sent its pale halo through the gloom as a beacon for our way. The wind thundered over the forest around us; each succeeding blast appeared more terrible than the last, and every moment indicated an increase of the storm.

"————the wrathful skies
Frightened the very wonderers of the dark,
And made them keep their caves—
Such groans of roaring wind I never
Remember to have heard——"

"The Heavens are against us," said Harry in rather a serious tone, as he dropped the reins of his bridle, "and it is folly to proceed;—come, I'm for tacking about to our starting post."

We were four miles from where we last stopped; I knew we could find no convenient stopping place nearer, that way, and endeavoured to encourage him——

"Harry—replied I—it is ill luck to turn back, you know the old adage——"

"Old or new adage," returned he, "it is evident the ill luck is all before us; besides we shall not get to *Will's* before bed time, and I'd sleep on my horse, rather than rouse the poor fellow such a night as this."

"Shall we stop at some neighbouring house?

"The storm grows louder," said Harry, not attending to my words—"come, we must decide, or pitch our tents in these woods for the night."

"Come along Harry"—I replied affecting some indifference to the threatning aspect around us—"are you scared at a little snow storm?"

"Do you call this a *little* storm," returned he smartly, "my life for it, such a storm was never felt in these parts before—but, my friend, we must about; I cannot see my horses head."

"Did you mark that?" said I.

"What?"

"My horse reared; he refuses to go."

"A dead halt," said Harry, as he turned about to me—"he is the wiser of the two."

In an instant we were alarmed by a loud cracking among the trees. Our horses flew back affrighted, when just before us, down came a huge oak, with a tremendous crash, sweeping with its ponderous branches, several small trees along with it. We both stood for a few moments in silence. We dared not to open our lips, for it seemed as if we had that moment been miraculously snatched from the jaws of death. We now distinguished the faint glimmer of a light through the naked branches before us; but the night was totally dark, and the trees had fallen over the road. How to effect a passage was a new difficulty that presented itself. On examination we found the road was literally blocked up. Our only alternative therefore was either to take the fence down, or return. We adopted the former: it was a worm-fence, and we found it very practicable. We soon arrived at the outer gate of a low farm house, from which the light proceeded. "I am not sorry for this," said Harry, as we dismounted and tied our horses to the fence, "and I'm up for the night." The door was immediately opened and a person appeared with a lamp, which was suddenly extinguished by the wind; a second time the light appeared, and again it was blown out. The door slammed with fury as he retired, and when it was opened a third time, we entered. An old man, who held the lamp, retired a few steps on our sud-

den appearance, but on recovering, he took us cordially by the hands.—" Oh, what a night is this!—come in—come in, friends;—what a fearful time you have had. These hands are very cold," said he, as he conducted us towards a large cheerful fire —" You have had an angry storm to war against." As we took our seats on a bench by the fire, which was now so very welcome to us, I thought of that verse in Job—" The stranger did not lodge in the street: but I opened my doors to the traveller."

A boy was sent out to shelter our horses, while the old man's wife kindly prepared us a wholesome supper; after we had partaken of a hearty repast, we resumed our seats at the fire place, and contemplated the aged patriarch, and the small family around him. He appeared to be about eighty; was small in person, but of a very venerable appearance. His hair was of a beautiful snowy white; and his mild and amiable countenance seemed to bespeak him a child of God and a friend to man. His wife looked rather younger, and the affectionate couple apparently enjoyed all the comfort and happiness of this life. We were sensibly affected by our situation. Gratitude bound us with a spell which precluded utterance. The melancholy silence that ensued was soon interrupted by a heavy blast of wind, which severed a large buttonwood before the door, from its roots. The whole foundation trembled, a storm of hail and snow now beat against the roof with dreadful fury.

" 'Tis a fearful storm," said the old man, as he drew his chair near the fire, and stirred up the burn-

ing faggots with a forked branch. "And may the Lord protect those who are not sheltered from its fury." After a pause, he continued. "It was such a night—draw nearer friends, the cold wind whistles through the old crevices.—It was such a night, I remember it well; when I was a young man, on a journey near the borders of Canada. It was lonely travelling, and twenty miles scarce neared the traveller to a house. I was on foot.—I overtook a stranger—likewise on foot; who was much distressed by fatigue and cold. We continued together, groping our way through the storm until by accident, I hardly know how, we were separated. I halloed repeatedly, but my voice was lost in the roaring winds. I dare say he did the same. I proceeded onward with much anxiety, until I arrived at a miserable log hut. After some difficulty I obtained admittance. But no entreaty could prevail upon any of the family to go in search of the poor traveller. The snow was already five or six feet deep, and I was totally unfit for the task. I went to bed with all the horrors my disordered imagination could conjure up. I fancied I could see my companion sinking in agony under the pitiless storm, and every sweep of the wind brought his dying groans to my ears.—He may be an only son, or an affectionate brother, thought I, and no friend is present to bear the sad tidings to his relatives. I could not sleep, and these reflections possessed my mind 'till morning. The storm had somewhat abated during the night; and I arose to retrace my steps in search of him.

After travelling back a few miles, I discovered the footsteps of a second person, nearly covered in the deep snow, which led off from the main road.—I followed them—but not far; Oh! it was a heavy sight——"

The voice of the old man trembled, and his aged countenance showed that the fountain of grief was not dried up, even on relating a circumstance so many years back.

"The poor man"—he continued, "had sunk in the snow and perished. There he lay, cold and stiff—I looked upon his face, it was a youth of handsome features. A letter was grasped in his hand—I read it. It was from his poor mother, to whom he was returning after a campaign against the French. Providence assigned me to convey the dreadful news of his death. I wept over him, and buried his lifeless body in the snow. I cannot describe my feelings at the time. The The little snow-mound was his only monument—the winds of the forest his only dirge. I bathed the place with my tears—took his bundle, for his mother, and departed. Never—never—never shall I forget it; every storm revives the sad tale in my recollection, aged and feeble as I am."

Such was the old man's story, one of the many he used to relate to his little family, during the long winter evenings, and owing to our particular situation, it was well calculated to take a strong hold of our feelings.

The Bible was then handed down, and the old man read the following parts from the 37th chap-

ter of the book of Job.——"God thundereth marvellously with his voice; great things doeth he, which we cannot comprehend. For he saith to the snow, be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. Then the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places. Out of the South cometh the whirlwind: and cold out of the North. By the breath of God frost is given; and the breadth of the waters is straitened. Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud; he scattereth his bright cloud; and it is turned round about by his counsels: that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth. He causeth it to come whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy."

He then made an appropriate and affecting prayer, all kneeling. He fervently returned thanks to the great disposer of events, that he had been the instrument in sheltering the strangers from so dreadful a storm, and concluded with a general thanksgiving. A family kneeling in prayer is always an interesting sight. The offering appears more sincere and does not proceed from that *fashionable ostentation* which too frequently attends the public worship of God. It is the devotion of the closet; and he that asketh in secret, the Lord will reward openly. But such a scene never appeared to me so highly interesting before. Prayer from a christian so aged—one whom we might almost call immortal—so sincere—so devout, and on such

an affecting occasion, might call tears from the most hardened sinner.

The fire was brushed up, and we all retired to rest. It was a happy night with us. I felt emotions to which I had hitherto been a stranger. The hail and snow beat hard against the roof, and the forests still thundered with the mighty force of the wind. There was some pleasure in contrasting the gloomy horrors that raged without, with our comfortable situation within.....Harry had seldom bent his knee in prayer, and never before from any other motive than the mere *form* of joining in a circle so engaged. It was different on this occasion, and before he closed his eyes, he spoke feelingly, how much he was affected by the prayer of the pious old man.

The sun arose smilingly next morning, and his beams shed a golden lustre through the Eastern windows of our chamber. We arose with those feelings which a bright clear day is apt to give after a dreary storm. Who has not felt the magical influence of a reviving sun on such an occasion?—After breakfast we left the cottage, having expressed our thanks, but with hearts too full to give adequate utterance to the grateful feelings which swelled them. As we pursued our journey the dreadful ravages of the storm were visible on every side, and while we saw what dangers we should have encountered had we continued our journey the night before, we felt, the more strongly, our kind reception at the old cottager's fireside.

SKETCH, 9.

LETTER WRITING.

"It is cruel to chill the precious sensibility of an ingenuous soul, by treating with supercilious coldness and unfeeling ridicule every indication of a warm, tender, disinterested, and enthusiastic spirit, as if it exhibited symptoms of a deficiency in understanding or in prudence."

HANNAH MOORE.

I have often thought it a matter of regret, that the cold formality of wordly custom should interpose a barrier against epistolary correspondence between two of opposite sexes, in cases where they entertain no serious thoughts towards each other on the subject of *matrimony*. *Why* is it considered, by many, an impropriety for a young lady to correspond with a young man, with whom she may be on familiar terms? Is it in itself, *absolutely wrong?*—Or, is it not rather an unreasonable *negative custom* of the world?—a mistaken opinion—or, an over-refined delicacy on the subject of female rectitude?

It is generally admitted that young men derive more refinement, grace, softness, tenderness of

feeling, and polish of manners, in good female society, than in their own;—and that, on the other hand, females, in judgment and understanding are improved more in the company of men, than among their own sex. This proceeds in a great measure from a natural inclination of the sexes to appear amiable and pleasing in each others sight —and consequently from that scrupulous regard to propriety and decorum towards each other, which is never so sensibly felt among one's own sex.

Hannah Moore, that amiable and distinguished writer, says, "Is either sex so abounding in perfection as to be independent on the other for improvement? Have men no need to have their rough angles filed off, and their harshnesses and asperities smoothed and polished by assimilating with beings of more softness and refinement? Are the ideas of women naturally so *very* judicious, are their principles so *invincibly* firm, are their views so *perfectly* correct, are their judgments so *completely* exact, that there is occasion for no additional weight, no superadded strength, no increased clearness, none of that enlargement of mind, none of that additional invigoration which may be derived from the aids of the stronger sex?"

If the sexes are more improved in conversation and manners in each other's society, how much higher and more beneficial may the degree of improvement be extended in a conversation *upon paper*, on religion, morals, literature, and a thousand other interesting subjects;—where their ideas

may be given in a manner combining the powers of reflection with an elegance and ease of expression.

Females are generally very fluent, and sometimes eloquent in conversation, but, I mean no disrespect to the sex when I say, comparatively very few of them can express their ideas well on paper. It is not from a deficiency of natural capacity. They *have* ideas—but it is the want of *exercising* those ideas in that particular manner. No kind of composition is more easy, and at the same time better suited to the female mind than letter writing. It is a species of composition which does not require much study or labour, nor must it be careless or slovenly. As *Blair* observes—"it possesses a kind of middle place between the serious and amusing."

In a letter we look for the *heart* more than the *head*, for the *feelings* and *affections*, more than the *elegant learning* of the author. The more ease and familiarity, and the less study or laboured ornament we find in a letter, the better we are pleased with it. It is, as the author last quoted, emphatically says, "*a conversation carried on upon paper*," and the nearer it assimilates to the common language of the heart, the more forcibly does it strike upon our own feelings.

The interest we feel in perusing a letter is identified, in a very great degree, with the love or admiration we bear towards the writer. We are fond of seeing the private letters of great men, because we have a curiosity to know how *they* feel

and express themselves, on private and familiar subjects. Any thing at all on paper from a beloved friend is always acceptable. For this reason, therefore, the superior advantages of a well conducted correspondence between those of *opposite sexes*, are very manifest. A young man, for instance, would always feel a high gratification in a correspondence with an amiable female. And it cannot be denied, that a female would receive a letter with additional interest from one of the other sex. This feeling is the very *spirit* of a correspondence. Genius—modest, retiring genius—will always shine most in these private intercourses.—For it is the fear of public opinion that dampens the ardour of genius, and prevents it often from budding forth in its true, native colours. When the mind, or heart is warmly interested in any performance, it can always execute it better. And it is very difficult to excel in any thing without the mind is deeply engaged.

Females are not generally opposed to corresponding with young men, from any positive conviction of its *impropriety*—but from a fear of the world, and appearances. Custom does not sanction it, except under particular circumstances.—And from a diffidence, or modesty, characteristic of the sex, they yield to the force of opinion, or rather *prejudice*, and are generally averse in consequence to exercising their talents in that way.

I would not be understood as recommending the sex to be *indifferent* about the opinion of the world. Custom and fashion, however absurd, or

arbitrary, cannot always be opposed with impunity. Females cannot be too circumspect in their behaviour. Their peculiar situation renders them more liable to remark, than men. I would speak rather against the prevailing prejudices (if I may call it such) than condemn the disposition to conform to it. And yet how is any absurd opinion or custom to be done away with, except by acting against it? Admitting the abstract position, that it is dangerous for a female to act in opposition to prevaling customs—we might enquire——Could she commit herself by going contrary to such a one as *this?* Would it not be wiser in the female sex, in this as in many other things, to act upon the strict rules of reason and propriety, and disregard the observations of those *nice* pretenders to female delicacy and decorum who are generally so *careful* of their *neighbours* reputation?

All customs which are not supported by reason should be abolished; and there are no good reasons why a lady sufficiently intimate with a gentleman to *converse* with him on familiar topics, should not *correspond* with him on rational subjects, without being subjected to the idle reports of the world. The only difference in appearance between a conversation by *letter*, and a *verbal* conversation is, that the former would indicate a *greater intimacy* between the parties—and where is the impropriety? Is there any thing *discreditable* in two of opposite sexes professing and exhibiting a strong friendship for each other, without a thought of *matrimony?* Yet such a thing will afford tea-table

chat for a whole neighborhood, and it is generally considered a strong proof that a *marriage connection* is in embryo.

I will relate a little circumstance that happened in the village somewhat elustrative of this subject. Even in country towns, the fashions and foibles of the city, will find their votaries.

A young lady of respectable parents, in the village, became acquainted with a gentleman of excellent literary attainments, who resided a few miles off. They both possessed well cultivated minds, and a refined taste in literature. Both equally fond of observing, and moralizing on persons and things. They were zealous in improvement, and their leisure studies were very similar. It is seldom that two persons of such congenial dispositions meet together in the wide range of society, without forming a friendship—a warm, feeling friendship. And why may not a warm, and at the same time a purely *disinterested* attachment exist between two of *opposite sexes?* Can they not esteem without *loving?* Or if they *love*, must it always have reference to *matrimony?* There is a friendship of the *soul;* a mental attachment, founded on a native sympathy which is always felt in kindred minds; particularly where there is literary genius. An elegant writer on this subject says—"The qualities which constitute literary friendship, compared with those of men of the world, must render it as rare as true love itself, which it resembles in that intelectual tenderness of which both

so deeply participate. Literary friendship is a sympathy, not of manners, but of feelings."*

Such a friendship existed between these two interesting individuals. Their peculiar circumstances prevented the least idea of affection founded on any other motive than the enjoyment of each others society. His visits to her dwelling were frequent, and they mutually regretted that the circumstance of his living some distance from the village, prevented them from enjoying each others conversation oftener. To remedy this, he proposed that they should hold a correspondence. She cheerfully assented, and not a week went by after that time, without one or two letters passing between them. They entered into it at once, with the delight and interest they had always felt in their personal interviews. The subjects they dwelt upon were chaste and rational. They knew each others taste, and neither of them was ever at a loss to gratify that taste. Literature, Society and the daily events that transpire with occasional reflections on the past, will always afford an ample fund of interesting material for the pen of genius in letter writing.

Such a correspondence was as instructive as it was amusing. *Her* letters abounded with that amiable softness—sweetness, and tenderness of feeling so characteristic of her sex—and his with the manly and open reflections of a strong and liberal understanding. The correspondence thus begun in the spirit of a pure disinterested friendship,

* Literary Character, pa. 230.

continued with increasing interest for several months. But innocent and laudable as it was, it excited the intermeddling curiosity of the neighbourhood, and it soon spread throughout the village, magnified into a monstrous breach of female propriety. Many considered it a conclusive evidence of a *serious courtship*. Some thought it highly improper, and expressed their surprise that the *parents* of the young lady did not interfere at once. It appeared quite *shocking* to others, that a female could think of *writing* to a young man. All had something to say about the matter; for such a thing was not customary in the village, and as the young lady was of one of the principal families, it became a subject of greater notoriety than it probably would have done, under other circumstances.

All these wonderings and querulous remarks could not fail of reaching the ears of the fair correspondent. She was a modest girl, and was not calculated to bear the frowns of the world. She never felt that she had done any thing incompatible with the dignity and modesty of her sex, in corresponding with a person of virtue and intelligence, but such a torrent of illiberal opinion overpowered her feelings, and the correspondence was abruptly dropped. *He* wrote as usual—but his letters remained unanswered, he enquired the cause, but she was silent—she *could not* write. She felt like one convicted at the bar of public opinion, of some heinous crime, and the bare idea of being the topic of the world's remark, overwhelmed her. Her

friend visited her in person, but her conversation and manners towards him, were entirely altered. She could not help *respecting* him as usual, but her bosom was chilled, and she could no longer treat him with that warm hearted—cordial friendship, which had always before inspired her. Her altered behaviour, which was the same when ever after he was in company with her, worked upon his feelings, and he finally discontinued his visits.—Thus terminated as pure and valuable a friendship as could be formed between two individuals,—in consequence of an absurd but fashionable prejudice.

I shall conclude this sketch with an extract from an excellent little poem, applicable to the subject; written by *Mrs. Muzzy*, the amiable Poetess, of New-York.

Why may not woman's heart aspire,
  The soul's pure intercourse to prove?
She cannot genius—worth admire,
  But she must be accused of LOVE.

Slaves from our birth—the spark divine,
  Which nature planted in the soul,
Must burn unseen—in secret shine,
  O'erawed by *custom's* stern control.

And when truth's bright and holy flame,
  Electric flies from heart to heart,
Poor woman hides, with trembling shame,
  Feelings which angels might impart.

SKETCH, 10.

MARY IRVINE.

"———— and if you hear hereafter
That I am dead, inquire but my last words,
And you shall know that to the last I lov'd you.
And when you walk forth with your second choice
Into the pleasant fields, and by chance talk of me,
Imagine that you see me—lean and pale,
Strewing your path with flowers——"

OLD PLAY.

There is a virtue in the constancy of a woman's affection, which we are forced to admire, even in its excess. She has feelings peculiar to herself. While man turns coldly away from the object of his former love, woman remains firm in her attachment, even amidst the keenest injuries and the most chilling neglect. If she is abused, she pines in secret, and not only conceals the cause of the grief that rankles in her bosom, but will even bless and cherish the hand that planted it there. O, that such loveliness should perish by the very hand that was pledged to nourish it—that such a heart should ever be wrecked by cruel neglect—

that love, pure as that which first made Eden smile should be blighted by a misplaced affection, and the heart that cherished it wither away to an untimely grave—a sad memento of abused virtue.

Perhaps in the following story the reader will recognize some truth. It is one of no uncommon occurrence, and will probably recal to his mind some incident of a similar nature in the sphere of his own acquaintance.

Mary Irvine was an innocent, lovely girl—and an only child of respectable parents—who, although limited in circumstances, brought her up with all that tender care and fondness which parents are apt to bestow upon the chief, or only object of their mutual affection. She was the idol of their hearts. Her father watched the early promises of his child with a fondness savouring of enthusiasm.

> "How like a new existence to his heart,
> Uprose that living flow'r beneath his eyes!
> Dear as she was, from cherub infancy,
> From hours when she would round his garden play.
> To time as when the ripening years went by,
> Her lovely mind would culture well repay,
> And more engaging grew from day to day."

At an early age she was placed at a boarding school in the nearest town, where her improvement realized the fondest hopes of her parents and tutor. Here she became acquainted with a young man of genteel appearance, by the name of Wallace. Although she had all the maiden bashfulness of her age and sex, the innocence and openness of her heart flattered the hopes of her admi-

rer. He became in a short time ardently attached to her. She never had a friend before, except one of her own sex and age, and had never known any other attachment except those which are usually formed amongst school girls. This new friendship, professed in a warmth of language and sentiment that she was entirely unused to, awakened her own tender feelings, for she was too innocent to suspect, and too inexperienced to calculate upon the operations of the human heart. She was pleased with his deportment; she felt the kind words, and the kind favours he so frequently bestowed upon her. He attended her in her evening walks, and at little parties of pleasure, and no opportunity passed of which he did not take advantage, to win her affections. She was unconscious that there was such a passion as love, other than that which she possessed for her parents, but now she felt it deeply—warmly—and during the remainder of her stay at the school, Wallace became almost the only object of her affections.

She soon after returned to her parents. He followed, and ventured to visit her at her own home. She was not yet sixteen; and the coldness of her parents convinced him that his attentions were not acceptable, *to them.* They found however that their daughter was attached to him in a degree sufficient to alarm them. They tenderly remonstrated with her—told her Mr. Wallace was a stranger, and she much too young to indulge a serious affection for any young man.—Wallace was at length, forbade the house, and

every means was resorted to, for the purpose of weaning their daughter's affections from him.—Favourite books were bought for her perusal—she was indulged with various kinds of rational amusement; but all in vain. Their intimacy was too far advanced—their affections had become too firmly united, to be easily removed.

Mary evinced a silent displeasure at the marked coldness, or what she considered the great *severity* of her parents towards her favourite. She loved them;—she looked up to them, as the kind and watchful guardians of her youth; and wept that she should have a feeling not entirely in unison with their's—a love in which they did not unite.

The banishment of Wallace did not terminate the interviews of the young lovers. They still met, clandestinely, and the restrictions which prevented them from seeing each other so often as formerly, rendered their stolen visits only the more dear. It was in one of those visits, he ventured to propose a union with her. Mary trembled at the mention of it, for notwithstanding her warm affection for him, she had never given the subject a serious thought. She made no other reply than that she would submit it to her parents. She could not think of taking so bold a step without *their* knowledge and consent. But Wallace represented to her how futile it would be, and at once expressed a doubt of her affection. "Mary," said he, "the question is for you alone; it must be decided by *yourself!*" Her feelings were over-

come; she leaned on his arm in silence, while her tears trickled down upon his hand. She continued silent for some minutes—then raised herself and was about leaving him, but he held her hand and said, in an emphatic tone; "once more, Mary, let me know your answer now, or we part forever."———What was she to say? In the conflict of her affection and her fears, she was at a loss to determine.—To oppose the will of her dear and beloved parents would be almost death to her—and to resign her friend *forever!* was to make her miserable for life. Hardly sensible of what she did, she pressed his hand fervently to her bosom, and could scarcely speak loud enough to say, "I am *willing*."

They parted, but Mary's mind was far from being tranquil. She shuddered at the answer she had given, when she thought upon her parents. And now for the first time, she regretted that she ever saw Wallace. She was an only child, and the pride of her parent's hopes. She remembered their dislike for Wallace, and their advice to leave him; and now she was about taking an irrevocable step against their will, and without their knowledge. But it was too late to retract. She could only lament what she was unable to remedy.

It was not long before they were married. The wedding was secret, but it soon spread abroad, and reached the ears of Mary's parents. It was almost a death blow to them, for they had never known their daughter to act contrary to their wishes before; and while they looked upon it as a withdrawal of her affection from them, they con-

sidered it as the seal of her own unhappiness.—She was not obedient to their will, yet they still felt tenderly for her; they could not forget the ties which still bound her to them as a daughter.—They represented to her the impropriety of the rash act, and received nothing but silent tears in reply. But it was done, and all that now remained was for them to forgive and sanction a vow which neither love, nor tears, nor entreaty could revoke.

For awhile, nothing could exceed the happiness of the young couple. They enjoyed in the smiles of each others affection, all that their fancies had ever pictured of connubial felicity. They saw in each others society a world of bliss; and their little home seemed to them a terrestrial paradise.—Mary's parents became fully reconciled; and while they smiled on the sweet contentment of the happy pair, they could not but censure themselves for their former opposition to the marriage.—There seemed to be throughout the little circle a perfection of bliss which they had never experienced before. But it was soon to terminate.—Our brightest prospects are often like a morning dream. These blessings were like the ripeness of autumnal flowers that bloom forth in that maturity of loveliness which is ever the harbinger of a sudden decay.

In a short time, Wallace's affections grew weaker, and there was an evident change in his attentions towards his wife. He had long been acquainted with a society of thoughtless young men,

whose time and money were chiefly devoted to taverns and gaming-houses. All this had been entirely unknown to Mary and her parents, and during the first eight or ten months, there could not have been a more kind and affectionate husband. But now, nothing could restrain his licentious propensities. As his affection for Mary diminished, his desire for revelling with his old companions returned, and he now gave himself up almost entirely to their society.

Mary's father in the mean time died; and her mother, who was seldom contented in the absence of her daughter, concluded to spend the remainder of her days with the young couple. But it was to witness a sad contrast in so early a stage of their affections. She beheld with pain and anxiety the absence of those kind little attentions which at first fell from Wallace towards his wife, and which tend so much to sweeten the ties of married life. He was no longer at the fire side beguiling the evening hours away, by reading to his Mary the pages of some favourite author. He no longer cheered her with the sprightliness of his conversation—those tones to which she had always listened with such a delightful tenderness of feeling. When at home, he had become sullen and morose—said little, and would not suffer the least reproach.

Mary smiled on him with her usual tenderness, hung upon his neck when he returned in the evening, and while she parted the dark locks from his brow would ask——"Why his gentle features no longer wore the pleasing smile that used to

enliven them." Wallace would look up and catch the mild expression of her soft blue eyes, and turn his head away in silence.

His conduct had now become no longer equivocal to the mother. It proved that he regarded neither the happiness of his wife, nor the reputation of his own character. He seldom returned home before midnight, and often remained out till daybreak. Mary sat lonely and melancholy, night after night, by the flickering lamp, eagerly catching the sound of every chance footstep without, in hopes it might be the return of her husband. Often—often would she go to the door to watch, while all without was darkness and gloom—not a house open—not a solitary individual near, and as she closed it, would wonder with a sigh, why his affection did not hasten him home sooner. How often is it the case with true, but unrequitted love, to *imagine* there is still a mutual feeling—still some lingering trace of former affection left, in the object of its adoration, notwithstanding it receives in return nothing but the most cold and chilling indifference. Mary Wallace loved too deeply and too sincerely herself to suppose it possible for the heart of her husband to feel *such* an indifference. In the fullness and innocence of her love, she judged Wallace's heart by her own. Ah! little did *he* dream while in the wretched abodes of vice with his equally guilty companions, that he was causing the heart of one, who should be most dear to him, to mourn in silent sorrow. Little did he think, during his fitful gleams of pleasure that

there was one, whom he had vowed to love and protect, wasting away the little measure of comfort that grief and disappointment had spared her. But intemperance steels the heart equally against tenderness and reproach;—it is listless of the song of sorrow, or the warning voice of admonition.

Mary was not calculated to stand this severity long. Her mother beheld with grief the fading features of her lovely child. The roses no longer looked flush upon her cheek. Her soft blue eyes grew dim; her delicate frame was gradually wasting away; and that countenance, which formerly beamed so brightly with love and cheerfulness, was now settled down into a gloom of foreboding melancholy. Her friends visited her often, and expressed their concern for her situation, but she seldom spoke to them. They always left her with sorrowful hearts, for they had never known Mary thus before. She was the same lovely girl—but all her cheerfulness and vivacity had fled.

Her mother, under the influence of these circumstances, ventured to expostulate with Wallace; but he darted a disdainful look upon her, and replied coldly——"Madam, this is *my* house; if you are not pleased with it, you know the alternative." Then turning with a haughty air, he left the room. Mary burst into tears, and begged for *her* sake, her mother would say no more to her husband on that subject; then burying her face in her mothers lap, she added——"I cannot think he does not love me—I know he has too good a heart to deceive me." Her mother mingled her

tears with the daughter's, and they both wept in silence.

Mary's illness increased, and she was soon after confined to her bed. Her mother hoped there would *now* be some alteration in Wallace's conduct, and once more represented to him the alarming situation of his wife. But he still exhibited the same hardened coldness, and seldom visited her chamber, except when particularly requested.

There is an unnatural apathy exhibited by some individuals, which seems to grow by indulgence into a fixed habit, rendering the heart impervious to the most affecting appeals of humanity, and to be melted only by some extraordinary circumstance purposely wrought by the hand of Providence. It was so with Wallace; for lovely as was his wife in the bloom of health and beauty, and affectingly interesting as she was in sickness, he considered her neither an object of his love nor his sympathy. And she, like a forgiving angel, bore it all in silence. Not a murmur—not a complaint did she ever utter against her delinquent husband; for she still loved him. Often would she take her little infant in her arms, and as she imagined she discovered a resemblance of Wallace portrayed in its innocent little features, would kiss its rosey cheek over and over, and then vent her feelings in sighs and tears.

Thus lingered the lovely sufferer, day after day, under a hopeless malady brought on and accelerated by the neglect of the one she most dearly prized on earth. One evening soon after a sudden

change took place in her disease, and she was considered dangerous. Wallace was absent, as usual—he was sent after; but the servants returned without being able to find him. Again they searched, but without effect. All the house was in confusion, and every mind turned upon the absence of Wallace. His return was her dearest wish, and it was a natural conclusion that he alone could prevent her speedy dissolution. She grew worse every moment; her breath gradually became shorter. She was resigned!—"I wish not to live" she sighed in weak faltering accents.—"But Wallace, my dear, dear Wallace—how can I die without seeing thee?" Her mother who was attending by her bedside in an agony of feeling, endeavoured to sooth her by expressing all she could well express, in a hope that Wallace would soon return. "But he knows it not"—continued the lovely sufferer—Oh, that he were here! One last—last farewell to him, and thee, dear child!!" Her voice here failed, and as she clasped her hands together across her breast, she was heard to whisper a short prayer in which Wallace's name was affectionately mentioned. What a heavenly disposition. In the agonies of death, and in apparantly the last prayer she would ever be able to offer to the throne of Grace, she coupled the name of her abandoned husband with her own dear soul, and prayed particularly that God, in his infinite mercy, would forgive *him* and be his kind protector, after she was gone. In a few minutes she was somewhat recovered and appeared more tranquil in her mind. At her re-

quest, her mother then repeated that beautiful hymn of Watts'—of which the following is a verse:——

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are;
While on his breast I lean my head
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

She listened to these words with a delightful emotion, and repeated them after her mother had finished.

The night was passed in the stillness of the grave. Not a voice echoed in the quiet mansion. Her mother sat patiently, but with an anxious countenance, on the bed side,—administering such little necessaries as were required, at those waking, but fearful intervals which succeed the brief slumbers of a death bed.

Day-light at length broke through the windows, but Wallace had not yet arrived. The unfortunate victim struggled effectually with death. Nature seemed to have exhausted her powers, but the soul still lingered in the frail tenement, like a spirit waiting to perform its last office, before winging its flight to sublimer realms. She lay silent and still, gazing vacantly through the Eastern lattice on a few of those light floating clouds which sometimes linger in the blue heavens after the opening dawn—the remnants of a gloomy night, which melt away before the rising sun-beam, and leave a bright unchequered day. She was probably likening the smile to herself, when a noise below betokened the arrival of *Wallace.* Her countenance brightened up, as she heard the dear name—a hec-

tic glow suffused her cheeks—her eyes were fixed upon the door; in a moment it was opened—Wallace entered, and she made a sudden effort to rise and meet him. He approached her, and as he knelt by the bed side, she threw her weak arms around his neck, and they both wept long and deeply. This was the first time Wallace had shed tears for his wife, or seemed to feel in the least concerned for her situation. On raising himself, a pleasing smile shone through the tears that hung upon his wife's cheeks. She seemed entirely wrapt up and lost in contemplating his features. After looking tenderly on him for a short time, she said in a soft weak tone———

"Now Wallace, I am happy."—Then attempting to place their infant in his arms, (whose little pale cheeks seemed deeply to sympathize with its mothers faded features) she continued———"Be a Father to this little one: sweet innocent!—it can no longer have a mother.—Wallace—you have come to witness—the last—last—moments———

"Heaven forbid, my Mary—my lovely Mary," cried Wallace, who had not before, spoken a word ——"You cannot—you must not *die!*"

But the repentance was too late; his kindness, or his wishes could not now restore her to health.—As well might he have attempted to renew the verdure of the tender plant, which the tempests have bent to the ground, whose blossoms are decayed, and the vital source of its existence is destroyed.

Her struggles were now in reality the last symptoms of her disease. She breathed with great difficulty, and her bosom scarcely swelled with the impulses of her last efforts. Her glazed eyes were fixed upon the face of Wallace, and there was still a gentle smile upon her lips. Placing one hand in her husband's—the other in her mother's, she was just heard to say———

"I die happy!—Farewell, my Mother;—farewell, dear Wallace,—may the Lord favour thy end, as he does mine!—farewell—fare———"

Wallace kissed the last word from her lips, and throwing his arms around the neck of the beautiful corpse, he poured out the anguish of his soul in a flood of tears. He kissed again and again the pale lips, which yet had the smile of death upon them; after putting also the lips of the unconscious infant to those of its mother, he gave a deep and tender look upon the faded corpse, and as he left the room, he burst out, in an agony of feeling——— "Farewell—loveliest of angels—farewell."

He retired to a private apartment to give vent to his bitter reflections in silence. He now felt the loss of that amiable being he had treated so shamefully; and his conscience told him, *he* was the fatal cause of her death. There is perhaps no calamity so painful as that which will not admit of hope as a remedy.

Her funeral was attended by many sincere mourners. Every eye spoke for the heart, and indicated the strong affection that existed for the deceased. Wallace walked alone, in deep mourn-

ing. Before the earth was thrown upon the coffin, he scattered over it a few of the favourite flowers which Mary had cultivated with so much care and fondness. After witnessing the narrow grave closed forever—he gave a deep sigh, and departed with the rest of the company.

Wallace became a sincere penitent. His little infant which was also called Mary, bore a strong resemblance to its mother, and he dwelt upon its sweet countenance with a melancholy rapture.—He entirely discarded all his late dissolute companions, and became a pious and regular attendant at church. The last words of his wife were neatly inserted in a circle formed by a lock of her hair, which he preserved with her miniature. It was one of the tokens of their first love. The grave of Mary did not remain unvisited. Not a sabbath passed that the repentant husband did not visit the sacred spot—and his prayer was that he might be laid at her side.

SKETCH, 11.

THE PRISONER.

"Why does my lingering soul her flight delay?
Come—lovely maid—and gild the dreary way;
Come wildly rushing with disorder'd charms,
And clasp thy dying lover in thy arms;
Close his sad eyes——receive his parting breath,
And sooth him sinking to the shades of death."

DAY.

The preparations were going on briskly in the humble little dwelling of *Charles Melville* to receive an addition to the small family that now inhabited it. An aged widowed mother, and himself were all that remained of a large family, in whose possession this lowly little mansion had been for upwards of half a century. In a few weeks Melville was to be united to his Anna—a blooming young girl, whose fascinations had attracted the attention of many young suiters in the village. Among the rest was a Mr. O'Conner—a foreigner, of genteel deportment, and possessed of great wealth. He had resided but a short time in the village—and during that period he succeeded in introducing

himself into the family of Mr. Wood, the father of Anna, and professed a strong affection for the daughter. He had however, more influence over her parents than herself; for her heart was already pledged to another. And notwithstanding the efforts of her parents, to gain her affections for a man whose affluence they represented in such a strong light—Anna Wood could not for all the gold on the continent, resign the one whom alone she could truly love. O'Conner was kind—offered her valuable presents and vowed his passion in the strongest terms; but she respectfully rejected both them and him—as her heart was irrevocably fixed upon another, she was unable to treat him otherwise than with a cold, formal politeness, which caused his heart to burn with jealousy for his successful rival.

If Charles Melville was poor, he possessed what was to Anna Wood more valuable than riches. He was pious, modest, sensible, industrious, and of a very kind and tender disposition. And a prudent female would ask no other qualities in the object of her affection.

Never did a couple love with more fondness. Each was *perfect* in the eyes of the other. It may be called a blind weakness—but such a weakness is amiable with those who truly love. As the nuptial day drew nigh, they seemed to look upon each other with increasing tenderness. But Anna had now another interest in a speedy connection, independent, but growing out of her love for Melville. The preference for him, and the rejection

of O'Conner's proffers had offended her parents, and the paternal roof no longer afforded her that peaceful and affectionate home she had hitherto enjoyed. Her father no more considered himself a protector, and her mother seemed to love her no longer, for they considered her a disobedient ungrateful child. Charles Melville therefore was the only person now on whom she could look as a friend and guardian, and the severity of her parents increased, rather than diminished her affection for him.

An incident occurred, however, of a nature calculated to blast her hopes, and plunge her into the deepest misery. Two or three days before they were to be united, the whole village was alarmed by the shocking murder of one of its inhabitants —a young man on close and intimate terms with Charles Melville. The mangled corpse was found in a thicket of woods, partly covered, near Melville's house—and as they had been seen together late the night before, suspicion at once rested upon Melville. Although his bright, unblemished character could hardly leave a ground for the allegation, yet several circumstances entirely corresponding, seemed at once to corroborate his guilt. He was arrested, and on appearing for examination, O'Conner stood before him as an accuser. Melville admitted with a very composed air, he had been with the deceased late the night before, but when a large over-coat was produced, which was taken from the corpse, clotted with blood—his face reddened as with the confusion of

guilt—and he hung his head. After being interrogated several times, whether he knew the coat—he replied in a faultering tone—"*It is mine!*"—He was then searched;—a few small articles were found on his person, which O'Conner swore stoutly had belonged to the deceased. He also swore that on the night of the murder he had heard them quarrelling together at the public Inn, and that to his knowledge, the prisoner held a considerable sum of money, which had belonged to the deceased. Melville was therefore, without further examination, conducted to prison, in the county town, to await his trial for the horrid crime.

This was the first murder that had ever been committed in the village, and the impression was consequently much stronger than such incidents usually occasion in larger towns. Charles Melville, whose standing was previously equal to that of any citizen in Somerville, was now looked upon as a base, treacherous monster. His own mother and Anna Wood, were the only exceptions who cherished a feeling of affection and pity towards him.

It may well be conceived that a charge of such a hideous nature against an intended husband, was calculated to pierce the tender heart of Anna Wood to the very core. The news came upon her like a thunder stroke—she wept in the most heart-rending manner—and although she hardly knew how to deny the guilt of Melville, yet she attempted either to palliate its enormity, or hide it altogether in forgetfulness. For she still loved

him with that faithfulness which woman's heart alone seems capable of nourishing.

Amidst this scene of agony and distress—O'Conner attempted to renew his visits at the house of Anna Wood's parents, under the impression that a circumstance so fatal to the reputation of Melville, could not but produce a change in her affections. But now, that he had taken such a conspicuous part against her best friend, his person was offensive to her sight. In his presence she preserved the most profound silence and reserve. This tended only to increase the perseverance of O'Conner. He even dared to introduce the name of Melville as an assassin, and as such, shortly to suffer. The injured girl could not bear this last reproach. Her bosom swelled with a mingled feeling of grief and indignation. She bursted into tears, and instantly left the room.

While Anna Wood despised—her parents encouraged the attentions of her visitor. They daily strove to wean her affections from a man, whose character was stamped with one of the foulest blots that could disgrace human nature, and who would, in a short time, in all probability, suffer an ignominious death. But it was all in vain.—"*I will follow him to the grave*"—was her only reply.

The prisoner was brought to trial; and after all the testimony was given in, and the whole case deliberately argued and examined—it was found strong and conclusive against him, and the Jury brought in a verdict—"GUILTY." Next day he received the sentence of death. He bowed in silence

and was reconducted to prison, to prepare for his awful doom. The day of his execution was fixed at six weeks hence. In the interim his time was chiefly devoted to the solemn work of preparation. He had always loved his bible, and it was now almost his only study. At his particular request, very few persons were admitted into his cell.—There were three only whom he delighted to see.—His favourite village Pastor—his own mother, and (perhaps not least in his regard)—his affectionate Anna Wood.

About three weeks previous to the day fixed upon for his execution, O'Conner applied for admittance to see the prisoner. On stating the nature of his visit, he was shown to the cell in which he was confined. He found Melville seated with the Bible at his side, apparently in deep meditation.

—"to prove, (in
my transactions in
a your best friend.
justice, that I should take the part I did. But peruse this—it will tell you at once, I wish you well."

As he spoke he handed a petition drawn up for Melville's pardon—signed by many respectable persons. The prisoner as soon as he had read it, tore the paper into fifty pieces, and threw the fragments contemptuously at the other's feet——"Leave me, O'Conner" said he—"I ask not your friendship *now*. I will perish an *innocent man*—rather than live a *pardoned criminal*. He then raised his clenched hands above his head, and cried

out in an emphatic tone—"I call Heaven to witness——I am clear of this bloody crime!"

O'Conner was much embarrassed at this very unexpected reception. He would have replied, but the prisoner waved his hand, and turned his head away in silence. O'Conner then left the cell without any further communication.

The afternoon previous to the day appointed for Melville's execution his faithful Anna called to take her last farewell. She approached him with a trembling step, and tearful eye; as if unwilling to hear that voice, which was so soon to be hushed—or to *clasp* that hand, so soon to wither away in the cold and silent grave. Melville arose as she entered—pressed her fondly to his bosom, and printed a kiss upon her faded cheek. "My lovely friend"—said he, "how soon are we to be torn from each other's embrace? But Anna there is a brighter and a better world, where sin and perjury can never come. We part now, my dear Anna—in *this* world—forever!—Ere another sun shall finish his daily course, I will be an inhabitant of that glorious region, where we shall one day meet —never—never—never more to part!"

Ah!—Melville!"—replied Anna, with a tremulous voice—"I can never survive you—I am a weak and despised creature. My heart is already breaking—it cannot survive you."

"I know, my Anna—thy heart is tender, and true. Amidst the scorn and reproaches that have assailed me, thou alone hast been faithful. But

remember you have parents; and for their sake, let not my death weigh heavy upon your heart."

"My parents no longer love, nor care for me," said Anna, as the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"They are severe to you now, my dear girl"—replied Melville, "but they will treat you better when I am gone. And you should under all circumstances respect and honour your parents. I know it is on *my* account you suffer, and it pains me to leave you in this situation.——I die! but lovely girl—as you now believe, I die innocently. I weep too—my Anna—but it is for the wretch who could add perjury to his guilt."

The more Anna Wood looked upon her unfortunate lover, the stronger dwelt the pain of separation on her heart. Now that they were obliged so soon to part he appeared more dear to her than ever—as

"The rose which unfold's its sweet blush to the eye
Seems loveliest when leaving the bush to decay."

They sat conversing, and exchanging sighs and tears together until the mellow shades of twilight began to darken the cell. The long narrow hall which led to it, soon echoed with the sounds of footsteps. In a few moments the keeper entered and announced the necessity of her departure. That voice was almost death to her. She felt before, that she must soon depart, but now that the dreaded moment had come, the idea was more than she could bear. Melville bore the separation with more firmness. He tenderly supported

her delicate frame as she fell in his arms; and it was in this unconscious, state she was carried out by the keeper—leaving the prisoner once more alone in the solitude of his cell, with thoughts more painful than any he had yet experienced.

His sleep through the night was sound and tranquil. He arose early next morning; and as his first, and most important duty—committed himself to the mercy of God. He afterwards arranged his dress, and every thing about him preparatory to his execution, and resumed his bible. In a few minutes his favourite Minister entered the cell for the last time, to continue his pious offices, and prepare the prisoner's mind for the awful change which so soon awaited him. They were alone, and there was nothing to interrupt the solemnity of their exercises.

About ten o'clock the low solemn peals of the great town bell were heard, like the hallow voice of some fearful messenger, from the shades of death; calling his victim to the sacrifice. In a few minutes footsteps approached;—a large key was thrust into the lock, and as the bar was loosened—the massive door swang open on its creaking hinges. Several officers entered the cell, and reminded the prisoner that his time had arrived.—"*I am ready!*" was Melville's reply. He left the prison, leaning on the arm of his Minister, and was apparently but little affected until he was entirely without the walls—and saw the large crowd which had assembled to witness his ignominious death—among whom he could recognize many

faces that he knew in his early days. It was too much for his feelings, and he wept bitterly. It was, however, but a momentary shock. He soon collected himself, and was able to walk with a firm step to the place of execution. He mounted the scaffold, and thirty minutes were taken up in the last religious ceremony, previous to the fatal moment when he was to be launched into eternity.—What an awful spectacle!—to behold a human creature in bodily health and vigor like ourselves, within a few minutes of eternity!—How soon is he to leave us, and become acquainted with that great mystery which no human knowledge can penetrate? The subject is one of affecting sublimity. When we recollect that the hand of death at once seals the doom of the soul, by cutting off all further hope of preparation, or atonement; we have reason to tremble, when we see a human soul so near its destiny, and we almost involuntarily enquire—*is it prepared?*

The last question was now put to the prisoner—whether he desired to say any thing further—His only reply was, as he raised his eyes to Heaven—"*May* He *forgive, as I now do, the guilty man for whose crime I am about to suffer.*"—An awful stillness pervaded the whole crowd. Only a stifled sigh, or a murmuring expression of pity was now and then heard from a few sympathizing hearts—Many hundred eyes were rivited upon the prisoner as he stood up under the gallows—and many turned away, overcome by the affecting sight. It was a moment of dreadful suspense. At this ir-

stant while all were expecting the fatal signal, an extraordinary tumult arose from a remove part of the crowd, which soon communicated over the whole common.—It was occasioned by the rush of a man towards the gallows, crying out with a loud voice—"*stay—stay the execution—He is innocent—and* I AM THE MURDERER ! ! !——Not only the crowd but the officers who had charge of the prisoner, were thunderstruck by this unexpected interruption. The stranger was *O'Conner*—"I am the guilty man," he repeated and I can give satisfactory evidence. The execution was stayed until an examination of the stranger should be had —The crowd gradually dispersed, some highly satisfied, and others disappointed at the result. But to none was this interruption more unwelcome than to Melville. He had prepared for death and this delay seemed but to prolong a miserable existence.

Perhaps there is no agony half so great as that of a guilty conscience, worked up to a sense of its own wickedness. Happiness can only exist in minds that are contented and free from guilt—And unless the mind *is* so, in vain does it seek peace or pleasure in external objects. A very little observation upon human nature will convince us, that however tranquil and contented, wicked and depraved minds may outwardly *appear*, there is always a canker at the heart, knawing the very source of happiness.

It was so with O'Conner, from the day when Melville was first charged, until the moment of

declaring his guilt. Melville was entirely innocent. O'Conner confessed in his examination that he had hired a ruffian who committed the murder, falsely imputed to the prisoner—but that the object was to destroy Melville, and not the deceased person. The mistake occurred from the circumstance of Melville's having lent his over-coat to his friend who had a considerable distance further to go—and the murderer taking him for Melville, shot him through the heart—but a short time after the two friends had parted. It was in this situation the corpse was found next day, not far from Melville's house, with his coat around it, which with the specious allegations of O'Conner made his guilt apparently certain.

The real murderer was then apprehended and condemned with O'Conner to suffer death in five weeks from that date. Melville was of course restored to liberty and to the arms of his beloved Anna and his afflicted Mother. A few days after, O'Conner desired to see him in his prison—and after making every acknowledgment which the lips could utter from a repenting heart—he signed an instrument of writing, giving full and entire possession of all his estate to Melville—receiving at the same time a full pardon for the injury he had done him.

Charles Melville was soon after united to Anna Wood—The Mother became cheerful once more, and the two hearts that had been borne down by afflictions too severe for their tender natures to withstand, were now gladdened by the return of

him who alone could cause joy to spring up in them once more. The cottage looked smiling—and never did a family appear more supremely blest.

But the case was different with the two prisoners—O'Conner died in his cell a week before the day of execution, and his accomplice expiated his crime on the gallows.

SKETCH, 12.

THE POOR DEBTOR.

"If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee."

PROV. 22—27.

It was a frequent practice with some of the elder inhabitants of Somerville, to amuse and instruct their families, by rehearsing incidents of their past lives, or stories of scenes that had happened in earlier times. In this way would they enhance the value of their own happiness, and the kind feelings that prevailed with each other in their own village, by contrasting them with the vices and troubles of other parts of the world. It was during a long winter night that one of these old respectable villagers collected his numerous family around him, before a large hickory fire—and told the following story of *The Poor Debtor*, or *The Silver Cup*.

"Hanson Gray—or *Hanse*, as he was called—was a sober, industrious Farmer. No farm in the neighborhood flourished so well. It was small

indeed, but a prudent, hard-working man does not require many acres to afford him a comfortable living. It is better to have a small place *well* cultivated, than a large one unattended to. Hanse was blessed with one of the best of earthly treasures—an affectionate, frugal and virtuous wife.—If any thing could vie with the smiling prospect in the green meadows, and golden harvest fields around them—it was the domestic happiness of their peaceful fireside. Anna Gray took as much pride in having her dairy and kitchen clean and comfortable, as Hanse did in making his harvest-fields look bright and flourishing.

Hanse knew how valuable to a farmer is a prudent housewife; and the more he thought of it, the more he loved his Anna. He was growing weakly in health, but he was still able to attend to his work, and in his anxiety to leave some provision for his family when he should be dead and gone, he frequently exerted himself beyond his strength. He had six children; the oldest was a boy of seventeen, who was well able to assist his father in many little things about the farm. They generally went to the fields together, and they returned together at the close of the evening.

Thus lived and flourished this happy family.—Many might envy their fire-side enjoyments.—Their life was like a day-dream. And why should such a life be disturbed? Who could have the heart to blight the sweet sunshine of such a home? Should not an honest, quiet, inoffensive family be permitted to repose in the peaceful shades of their

own retirement?—Alas! the ills of life often decree otherwise.

Times grew worse with Hanson Gray. He became more weakly in health—he could no longer attend regularly to his farm, as formerly, and it was fast going to decay. He could ill afford to hire others to assist him, and his own son, though a very active industrious boy, was not capable of managing it completely himself. His little income was now so much reduced, that he found it impossible to keep down the interest on a balance he still owed on his farm. For, but a few years before, in better times, he had purchased the place, paying half in cash, (the fruits of many year's labour) and permitting the other half to remain on mortgage until he should be able to pay it. His creditors became impatient—they pressed him, and his farm was sold by the Sheriff.

Hanse now saw, with a broken heart, that in a few months he should be forced to remove from his comfortable little habitation, and whither, he knew not. He never met the affectionate looks of his beloved Anna, without the keenest affliction. "I can bear it" cried the unfortunate man, "cripple as I am, but what will become of her, and the poor children? God bless them all."

He owed but one more creditor;—but that was one whose sordid interest had seared his heart to every feeling of benevolent humanity;—and the prospect of loosing his debt urged him to severe measures. The furniture of Hanse was very plain and humble—and if sold, could not bring the

amount of the debt. But he owned a *silver cup* of considerable value. This cup he always preserved with a kind of superstitious reverence; and it was this article that attracted the notice of the creditor.

If any thing had ever been said of Hanse's family, aught than the utmost good will, it was that a poor man should keep such a *costly* article in his house. All now expected that he would surrender the cup, and satisfy his creditor. But nothing could induce him to part with it. An officer was sent to levy on his goods;—the furniture was all noted; but on the day of seizure, the cup was gone. The furniture was sold, and brought but a trifle. The creditor in a passion issued another execution. The poor man still refusing to deliver the article—was thrown into prison—a helpless aged invalid!

There was no mercy now, and but little pity for the wretched family. Hanse, until *now*, had been thought an honest man in the eyes of his neighbours. But they deemed this withholding a valuable article from one who had a first demand against him, as an evident wish to defraud. It was in vain, he told them it was a gift—in vain, that he represented the doner to be a departed relative. From this time he was branded a dishonest man. His creditor was rich.—He was poor. I need not say, wealth had more influence than poverty.

What was to become of the family?—Winter was approaching—they had lost their friends, and they now appeared doomed to wander abroad.

houseless and alone, or to remain and perish.—They were driven from their home; and such was the distraction of Anna Gray in her tenderness for the children, amid such a hopeless ruin, that she had nearly died of a broken heart. But she could not shelter them, and all that she *could* do was to bid them go,—some families to whom the misfortunes of their parents were unknown, might take pity on them, and give them a home. She resolved to stay, and, with her youngest child, share the fate of her husband.

Thus was scattered this once happy family. The five children received the parting blessing of their distracted parents and wandered away on the broad world, while the youngest remained to share the miseries of its mother.

Their sufferings in prison were severe, but the anguish of their necessary separation from the children, was much more heart-rending. They contrasted their present situation with the felicity they had enjoyed in the bosom of retirement and tranquility, when their beloved offsprings formed the little fire-side circle. Indeed a great portion of the happiness or misery of mankind is drawn from comparison. Discontent generally proceeds from our beholding others in a better situation of life, and contrasting it with our own. But when we look around us, and behold the wretched thousands, who are probably indulging the same feelings in relation to us, we should blush for our ingratitude; and confess that we have reason to be

contented and grateful while we are blessed with more than they.

But the situation now of Hanson Gray was one of *real* misfortune, and he could not help increasing its poignancy by a recollection of past blessings. He however enjoyed one consolation—he felt that he was an *honest man.* He knew that appearances were against him, but the consciousness of his own rectitude supported him.

Many an innocent debtor has been doomed to the walls of a prison for his misfortunes. Inability to pay the demands of his creditors is often misconstrued into dishonesty. He is dragged from his home, already imbittered by a thousand cares—and is forced to undergo a legal punishment as an atonement to appease the resentment of some heartless creditor.

Hanson Gray was the victim of such a persecution; but he seldom wept, excepting when his wife leaned upon his breast under the force of her distress, and recalled by her sorrowing words, the fond images of their absent children.

"God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb"—said Hanse as he looked tenderly on the tearful cheeks of his wife; "and although those little ones may be shunned by many, who would extend the ruin of an unhappy parent to his children; yet the great Being 'who seeth all things in secret,' will protect them from want."

His wife felt the force of these remarks, for whenever she was depressed by calamities, a reflection that the mercy of Heaven will smile on the

afflicted, and broken hearted, who look above this world—always strengthened and relieved her.

It was several months that Hanson Gray remained in prison, before his creditor, finding his means to extort the sum due him, both expensive and ineffectual, suffered him to have his liberty.—But his condition was very little bettered. He had no home. He was without money—almost without friends—and he was unable to do any hard work. Trouble and confinement had increased the debility under which he had long laboured.—He was therefore obliged to solicite the little charity of some of the neighbouring families, and the miserable pittance thus derived, was *all* the dependence of himself—his wife and child.

I shall now lead your attention to the children. The three youngest found homes but a few miles from whence they started. The two eldest, who were the only boys, came to my house, after walking twenty miles, and offered their services to work for whatever I was willing to give them. I was not in want of assistance at that time, but the lads interested me, and I took them. Nor did I regret it. They were indeed, fine active boys; and together, they were equal to the hardest working man on the place. They were always up with the lark—and an hour after sun down, they were locked in each others arms, in a sweet slumber.—I knew nothing of their history, for they were always very quiet about it, until I learnt it from this circumstance. One evening after they had retired

to their chamber. I overheard the following conversation:—

"It will take us two months longer to save enough," said Charles—the eldest.

"And then," said his brother—"Oh! how happy father and mother will be to see us!"

"But how unhappy must they be now?" returned Charles—"father was never in a prison before, and neither of them knows where we have gone."

From their broken conversation I understood that their parents were in distress, and that these worthy youths were accumulating their little gains to relieve them.

"Blessed children!" said I, within myself—"Heaven will certainly reward such filial kindness!"

I determined to ascertain if possible, the fact about their parents. Accordingly, the next day I took Charles aside, and enquired if his parents were still living. He blushed, and hung his head. On repeating the question he simply answered—"yes."

"Where do they reside?" I asked.

He appeared still more confused at this question, and answered in a faltering tone——

"They live about twenty miles off."

"Have you any sisters, or brothers, besides the one here?"

"Yes—four sisters!"

"And, are they at home with your parents?"

"No!—they are—yes—one is, I believe."

I found I had touched a tender cord. His feelings were much agitated, and he evidently did not

wish to converse further on the subject. I attributed it however either to modesty or false shame. I therefore addressed him in an open familiar manner, determining to come to the point at once.

"Come Charles"—said I—"let me know the particulars; I believe your parents have been unfortunate, and there can be no harm in telling me all about their circumstances.

The poor little fellow at this, burst into tears, and hid his face in his handkerchief. I was myself much affected at this exhibition of sensibility, and much as my curiosity was awakened, I could not at that time continue the subject.

Several days after, I spoke to him again relative to his parents, and after considerable difficulty I gleaned the particulars of their misfortunes. I was not less pleased with the modesty of the youth in endeavouring to conceal his benevolent purpose, than with the act itself. Virtue and modesty are sweet handmaids. They throw a lustre equally upon each other. A virtuous action never appears so brilliant as when shining through the veil which modesty seems to spread over it.*

I immediately increased the sum beyond the necessary amount to accomplish his purpose, and after providing the children with a proper conveyance I bid them hasten to their parents, and to ex-

* "Modesty, (says a modern writer) is not only an ornament but a guard to virtue. It is a kind of a quick and delicate feeling in the soul, which makes her shrink and withdraw herself from every thing that seems to have danger in it."

pect soon to hear from me again. They left me—I shall never forget their parting looks. They were too young to dissemble, and their countenances bespoke the strongest feelings of gratitude I had ever witnessed. It touched my heart—and I turned away my head to hide my weakness, for I, too, shed tears.

I need not detain you by attempting to describe their joyful anticipations on their road home.—They had never felt so happy before; and they scarcely thought of any thing else on the way, than the prospect of so soon relieving their parents from distress.

They were soon at the end of their journey.—On enquiry they found that their father was released from prison. It was not long before they discovered their parents. And Oh!—what an affecting meeting took place!—Hanse and his wife were just lamenting their absence, and while they were wondering in what situation Providence had placed them—the two boys stood before them.—They embraced each other with tears of joy. It was a long time before any of them could utter a syllable. The presence of the children so overcame the feelings of their parents that it was enough for them to know they *were* present, and in health, without enquiring at once, the particulars of their absence, and *how* they came. Their arrival was like a ray of light upon the dungeon of some despairing criminal. But the father's joy was still more increased when he learned that his son's arrived with a sum sufficient to discharge his late

debt. The measures of the creditor had forfeited all demands against him;—but Hanse was determined to prove his honesty to the world. He therefore immediately sent Charles with the full amount and interest up to that day. The creditor was astounded—he received the money and said nothing.

Hanse now felt a relief in his mind which he never expected, in the few days he had to live.—And he now found himself treated with more favour by those around him. It was indeed a matter of much surprise to the whole neighbourhood; for they thought it as strange that he should now prove himself honest, as they at first considered his apparent departure from that character.

A short time after, I visited the family. I found them in very helpless, dependent circumstances. They received me as their best benefactor, and I felt more than rewarded by their unfeigned gratitude. I invited Hanse to bring his family and spend the remainder of his days on my farm.—His children could assist me, and they should all be provided for. He bathed my hand with his tears, and thus signified his assent, for he was unable to speak it. I returned, and immediately made preparations to receive them; and in a few days they were all inmates in my own house. We had collected the rest of the children, and Hanse in his last days now saw his family comfortable and happy.

He lived but a few months after. On his death bed he had one request to make;—he could not

die in peace until it was complied with. It was that his late creditor should be sent for. I went myself, and brought the creditor to his bed-side. He was reluctant to come, but it was the request of a dying man, and he could not refuse. Hanse was surrounded by his wife and children. As the man approached, he stretched out his hand to receive him.

"You behold me here," said Hanse, "in my last moments, attended by a family whom you reduced to penury and ruin. But it is not to reprove, that I have solicited your attendance. Oh no!—Heaven forbid such uncharitable motives. "This"—continued he, producing the *Silver Cup*—"this was perhaps the cause of my misfortune."

The creditor watched the countenance of Hanse with an attention which shewed that he was listening with much anxiety to catch whatever related to the mysterious cup.

"This article"—continued Hanse—"was the only legacy, save an honest reputation, bequeathed to me by an affectionate father. He had fought hard in the great struggle of our revolution under the immediate command of our beloved commander in chief; and this cup was a voluntary present from that great man, at the close of the war, as a tribute of respect for his services. My father on his death bed called me to his side and said—"*Hanson—I received this cup from the Father of our country;—you receive it from your father;—take it—*

and let your children say hereafter—they received it from their father."

The creditor on hearing these words appeared much affected. Hanse, called his eldest son to him, and added with emotion—

"Take it, my dear Charles—preserve it while you live, and in like manner let *your own* children receive the sacred relic:—I have done," said he, turning his face to the astonished man who had so severely persecuted him on account of that very cup—"I shall now die in peace with all. I freely forgive you—farewell!"

The creditor, overcome by remorse and confusion, flung himself upon his knees before the dying man, and buried his face for several minutes in the bed-covering. It was a solemn spectacle. Hanse's wife and all his children sat around the bed, moistening it with their tears. In about an hour afterwards Hanse fell into a silent slumber, from which he never awoke. We all regretted his death, and there was not, apparently, a more sincere mourner at his funeral than the *creditor*.

Charles was soon able to manage the farm himself. As I was growing old, I concluded to take up my future residence in Somerville, and I rented the farm to Charles, who supported his mother and the rest of the children for many years after. The world has since passed prosperously with him. His amiable conduct towards his parents has been bounteously rewarded. He has been able by industry and economy to purchase the farm, and he now resides on it, as happy as a man

can wish to be, in the society of a charming wife and several *children.*"

* * * *

Thus ended the old man's story. Many parts of it convey a profitable lesson. The poor debtor returned "good for evil," and he "loved his enemy." Two exalted virtues in a christian; virtues which are too seldom found. Our blessed Saviour enjoins it upon us to "bless them that hate us"—There is much magnanimity in such a blessing. One man will often persecute another, as in the case above, upon imaginary grounds. What course is so likely to awaken the remorse and repentance of such a person as to receive a kindness in return from the one he had so much injured? The story likewise inculcates the great merit and reward of filial kindness. But plain and humble as it is, the reader will require no illustration to enforce the moral; and here I leave it.

SKETCH, 13.

THE EVENING VISIT.

"'Twas e'en—the dewy fields were green,
On every blade the dew-drops hang;
The zephyr wanton'd round the bean,
And bore its fragrant sweets alang:
In every glen the marvis sang,
All nature listening seemed the while,
Except where greenwood echoes rang
Amang the braes o' Ballochmyle."

BURNS.

The shade of the tall oaks on the Western side of Somerville had already covered the village, and was slowly stealing still farther beyond its little boundaries. The sky was beautifully serene, and here and there a light cloud like a streak of pure burnished gold, showed itself above the horizon. It was in the early part of autumn. The leaves were slightly tinged with yellow, and as they were rustled by a slight breeze on the higher branches, they presented the beautiful glory of the Western sun which was now setting behind the distant hills. But the principle charm of the scene was thrown upon the broad slope of Laurel Hill. Its wild,

luxuriant foliage, rising romantically from a murmuring streamlet that winded along its foot—to an elevation which seemed to mingle with the pure azure above,—now presented to the full face of the sun all the variegated tints of the rainbow, and seemingly gloried in the triumph of its parting smiles, while all below was wrapt in comparative darkness. It appeared as if nature unfolded her brightest charms on this occasion, to hallow some benignant purpose.

A contemplative person might behold a scene from this eminence which would almost transport his feelings beyond the narrow confines of this world. He would view in the little village below him, and in the surrounding woodlands and lawns, an elysium of domestic and rural felicity, scarcely to be found on any other part of the earth. His heart would exclaim with the Poet——

"————If there's peace to be found in the world,
A heart that was humble might hope for it here."

Many of the labouring part of the little community might be seen returning from their avocations in the fields; some had been ploughing from the first dawn of that light, whose decline in the Western sky now invited their return. Others had been clearing their lands of part of that wilderness which still bordered on the village in all its native wildness. They were now returning after a useful days toil, to the bosoms of their happy families, who were ever ready to meet them with smiles of affection.

In the midst of the lovely tranquility which prevailed over the scene, a slight humming noise now and then arose from the village; occasioned by the innocent mirth of the school-children, who might be observed on many a little green, enjoying their youthful revelries. This was soon followed by a scene of another kind. Preparations were now to be seen in many places for a journey:—horses—chairs and dearborn waggons were soon put in requisition. The village was now a scene of general activity. Those who were not to join in the expedition, were all anxious to see its departure.

Among the number who were thus preparing for the evening visit, was the venerable *Mr. Somers*, (who has been mentioned as the first settler of Somerville) with his family, consisting only of his wife and one son. A neat little dearborn contained them, and they left the house just as the last sun-beam disappeared from the highest peak of the hill.

Mr. Somers was now very aged and infirm; and this he proposed to be his last visit out of the village. And this he could not wish to forego. Many of the families attached to the train in company, were those formerly belonging to his own household.—All his children had married, and were settled in the village, excepting William, the youngest, who was now the only child remaining with him.

William Somers, like all the other children of this worthy patriarch, had been educated to a knowledge and love of God. He had a noble and

generous spirit, and a kind and amiable disposition. In person, he was handsome and manly,—and his manners were graceful and attractive. His education and refinements were superior to most of the young men in the village, but nothing was more distant from his nature than pride, or cold reserve. He was kind and affable at all times, and it might be truly said, he was humblest among the humble.—Which endeared him to his friends much more than the brilliancy of his other qualifications.

"Amos Grant deserves well of the village"—said Mr. Somers to his wife, as they proceeded on the journey.—If christian piety—an honest, unblemished reputation—strict economy—generous charity—industrious habits—a warm love for his fellow creatures, and a universal desire to do good—have their influence in a little community like ours, then has Amos Grant been a blessing to Somerville."

"Yes, a rich blessing," returned his wife—"his good example alone has called into activity the virtues of many a kind heart in Somerville. I have often heard his character spoken of as an exemplary pattern of imitation."

"Nor has he been indifferent to the proper education of his children," replied Mr. Somers—"he has two as worthy sons as——"

"And Ellen Grant is not less worthy as daughter"—interrupted William, who was an interested listener of all that passed.

"True, my son," replied Mr. Somers, looking affectionately on William—"Ellen is a very lovely young girl, and a more amiable partner could not be found in the village, for a pious, industrious young man."

"And if a complete knowledge of the whole system of domestic affairs be a recommendation for a wife"—added Mrs. Somers—"Ellen Grant can justly boast of that as among her brightest accomplishments."

"She could possess none brighter, my dear"—replied her husband—"a prudent woman in the words of the Holy Scriptures, 'looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.'—Every female should pride herself on being a good housekeeper."

"She cannot be a complete wife else," said Mrs. Somers, facetiously, casting her eyes at the same time upon William.

William smiled as he looked up and caught the affectionate good natured glance of his mothers expression, and joined in the approbation of a good housewife.

They had but a short distance further to go, and the few minutes in which they hastened over the road, were beguiled away in conversing on the same pleasing subject. As they turned a corner of coppice woods, they found themselves at the entrance of a lane beautifully lined on either sides with fruit trees and all kinds of shrubbery. A voice of the sweetest melody now broke upon their

ears, and seemed to issue from some of the romantic bowers by which they were surrounded.

"It is Ellen"—said William in a tone of voice much animated, as he pressed his mothers hand in his own.

"But is not the air rather too plaintive for the occasion?"—asked his mother. "It is a song she knows I admire"—returned William—"and she tells me, she loves it herself the more on that account."

The cottage of Amos Grant now presented itself between groups of large trees, vines and shrubbery of every description. The voice stopped at the sound of the wheels, as the vehicle approached, and in a moment several of the company who had already arrived, appeared at the door to welcome the visitors.

Mr. Somers and his little family alighted, and were greeted with the joyful smiles, and the warm salutations of all present. Never did there appear in the village such unmixed sensations of delight. There was a smile in every countenance, and a blessing on every lip. But there was one among the group who was like the bright centre of some little system; throwing sunshine and animation on all the surrounding objects;—It was *Ellen Grant*, the intended Bride of William Somers—who had now arrived to unite his hand to her's forever.

They were worthy each other, and their affection was mutual. Ellen was a modest, innocent girl—artless in her manners, and warm and social in her disposition. Her features generally

wore a pleasing good natured smile, but they were now brighter than they had ever been before.—Her dress was plain, but of a good quality, and arranged with much taste. Her dark hair was neatly parted on her white forehead, and hung down in a graceful ringlet behind each ear. There was nothing dazzeling, or showy in her external appearance, but Ellen required no outward ornament to display her charms to advantage.

On one side of the room, was a couch, on which sat the father of Ellen, whose infirmities confined him entirely to his room. It was his earnest desire to see the consummation of his daughters marriage in person, and this could only be accomplished by having the ceremony performed at his own house. When William approached him and offered his hand—he bathed it with his tears, and was unable to speak for several moments. He then took the hand of Ellen and joining them together only said—"God bless you, my dear children."

William bowed, and led her to a chair and took a seat by her side. She never looked so lovely in his eyes before. He contemplated her now as one who in a few minutes was to become his affectionate wife. He had looked upon her before, with the eyes of a lover—one, it is true, who had gained the object of his affections, but was still fearful that his hopes, from some accident or other, might be defeated. But now all doubts and fears were to be dispelled by the blessed reality; now, the vision

that had so long captivated his finer feelings, was to be happily realized.

Mr. Somers and his wife were seated by the affectionate parents of Ellen Grant, deeply engaged in the interesting object of their visit. While the young couple looked upon their intended union as the necessary result of a mutual affection, their aged parents looked upon it as a compliance with the great design of Heaven—and, as fruitful with many future blessings, which neither could enjoy under any other circumstances. They felt—(and they could not be governed by selfish or mercenary views)—that these two were born for each other, and Heaven would smile on their union.

At William's request, Ellen once more sung the favorite air, on which he had often hung with such delight, from the earliest stage of their love. The company all listened with attention to the sweet accents, as they fell from her lips. The words spoke of the joys of true affection—and young and old seemed to feel the force of its application to the present case.

Mr. Somers soon after addressed a few words to the young couple, when they arose, while the company formed a circle around them. A solemn stillness prevailed for a few minutes, and every eye was now fixed on him, who was to perform the sacred office. The company beheld before them their aged pastor, who had united so many of the families of Somerville, now performing that ceremony on the last of his own children. It was a gratifying, and yet an affecting scene. His voice

faltered with emotion; and when he had concluded, a tear was seen to roll upon his cheek. He then made a solemn and impressive prayer, in which all seemed feelingly to participate.

After the ceremony was over, the company again gradually resumed their cheerfulness, and gratulations were poured upon the young married pair with the most heartfelt cordiality. They received these kind testimonies in a manner which spoke how much they felt within. William and Ellen were now husband and wife; and they were happy. *Moore* thus beautifully depicts such a union of hearts:—

"There's a bliss beyond all that the minstrel has told,
When two that are linked in one heavenly tie,
With heart never changing and brow never cold,
Love on through all ills—and love on 'till they die!
One hour of a passion so sacred is worth
Whole ages of heartless and wandering bliss;
And oh!—if there be an Elysium on earth,
It is this—it is this."

The assembly prepared to depart—and Ellen for the first time, to leave her parental home. Her aged father and mother blessed her thrice over. It was hard for them to part with their daughter, who had so long comforted and cheered their fire-side; and it was only on such a condition they could resign her society at all.

In a few minutes the bustle of preparation ceased, and they all departed, at an early hour. The moon had arisen and was now beaming brightly from the same clear sky—and upon the same scenery, that looked so beautiful in the rays of the

setting sun. They were not long on the road before the white houses of Somerville appeared in sight, as the moon shone upon them. The noise of their wheels as they rode briskly along, gave notice of their approach to the village, and many a door flew open, while the family hastened to see them pass.

As a token of respect to the young couple, all the company escorted them to the neat little dwelling that was to receive them, as their future residence. William handed his bride from the carriage in which they rode, and they were followed in by all the rest who remained several minutes, and departed one by one for their several homes.

Thus ended the evening visit; and thus was consummated an event which threw a smile of joy over the whole village. All were more or less interested, for all were particularly attached to Mr. Somers, and his family. Those who did not attend the ceremony in person, were their in heart—and they did not fail to call and congratulate the young couple on the following day.

Mr. Somers now saw the last of his children settled in marriage. It was a blessing he had often prayed for—and the chief remaining wish he had indulged of the things of this world. He had long been in a decline, and every day he saw his dissolution approaching. But he viewed it with the calm firmness of a true christian. He looked upon death as the necessary lot of all,—and life as a pilgrimage to a land, at which all must sooner or later arrive. The wicked—he used to say, were interest-

ed most with the *journey;*—the pious looked to the *end* of it. It is beautifully said by *Goldsmith*——

"Almost all men have been taught to call life a passage, and themselves the travellers. The similitude still may be improved, when we observe that the good are joyful and serene, like travellers that are going towards home;—the wicked but by intervals happy, like travellers that are going into exile."

It was but a few weeks after the marriage, that the inhabitants of Somerville lost their great friend—their benefactor and their guide—in the death of Mr. Somers. He blessed them all in his last moments as the children of his own blood; and they felt that they had lost a parent. His end was tranquil and happy—as his life had been holy.